

ORIENTAL BIRD CLUB



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THE ORIENTAL BIRD CLUB aims to:

- * encourage an interest in the birds of the Oriental region and their conservation.
- * liaise with and promote the work of existing regional societies.
- * collate and publish material on Oriental birds.

Two bulletins and a journal, *Forktail*, are published annually.

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Membership of OBC

Membership of the Club is open to all and costs £9 per annum (£6 reduced rate for nationals living in Oriental countries), and £15 for corporate members (organisations, libraries and universities). Special arrangements for payment in USA, Thailand and India. To join or for further details please contact the Membership Secretary, OBC, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2LD, UK.

Cover illustration: A pair of White-vented Myna *Acridotheres grandis* in a flowering silk cotton tree by Anwaruddin Choudhury.

Editorial

It seems quite remarkable that in a country like Nepal, which in recent years has become so popular with birdwatchers, there should be a new species of bird discovered (see page 10). Perhaps it says something about the majority of our 'species' - birdwatchers. So often, particularly when visiting a new country, birdwatchers like to visit only those places where others have been before. The Club, in its small way, does try to encourage visits and surveys of less well-known areas through its survey grants. Carol Inskipp the Club's Conservation Officer would certainly welcome applications for these grants for the coming year as well as applications for the 1991 Forktail Leica Award of £1,000. Details of both these can be found on page 7.

Another common feature of birdwatchers is the urge to buy reference works and to travel. The Club now has a number of arrangements with companies prepared to make a donation to our Conservation Fund on sales to OBC members. These are all listed in the Club News section - please do use them if you can.

As usual the Club owes its thanks to all the contributors to the *Bulletin* and to the artists Richard Grimmett, Adam Davison, Mark Fenton, David Swithenbank, Linda Schryver and Anwaruddin Choudhury. The Club is very grateful to the International Council for Bird Preservation for the use of its facilities in the production of the *Bulletin*.



Club News

OBC Meetings in 1991

UK Blakeney Village Hall, Norfolk on Bank Holiday Sunday 25 August. Please see the enclosed flyer.

UK Isles of Scilly, Porthcressa Centre on Thursday 17 October. An OBC evening after the log-call, including the Draw for the winners of the 1991 Grand Prize Draw.

UK AGM, Zoological Society meeting rooms, Regents Park, London on Saturday 14 December 1991. Full details with the November *Bulletin*.

For further copies of the flyer for the Blakeney meeting please contact Meetings Organiser, Dick Filby, at the Club's address or telephone 0603 767757.

Help Required with Meetings Outside UK

The Club is keen to organise meetings outside the UK. They need not be too formal and they provide a wonderful opportunity for those interested in the region's birds to meet and share experiences. The Club would like to hear from members willing to organise a meeting in their country and can offer ideas and assistance. Please contact the OBC Meetings Officer at the Club's address.

Grand Prize Draw for OBC - 1991

There are some excellent prizes once again for this draw, in fact there are even more than last year! All have been most generously donated and the Club is extremely grateful for this support. The top three prizes are a pair of Leica 10 x 42 binoculars donated by Leica Cameras, a Nikon Field-scope EDII with 20 x eyepiece donated by Nikon and a £250 travel voucher donated by WildWings Travel. The many other prizes are detailed on the tickets.

A book of ten tickets is enclosed with this Bulletin. Last year's draw was a major success raising some £3000 for the Club's work. The promoter, Dick Filby, would like to remind members that, as last year, the success of the 1991 draw depends on ticket sales.

Every member's contribution is very important; indeed last year's income was raised mainly by the large number of members who sold (or bought!) one or two books. Please attempt to better last year's success by trying even harder this year!

Win a painting by Martin Woodcock

We are very pleased to announce some excellent incentives to sell tickets for this year's draw. There are rewards for the twelve people who sell the most tickets. The two 'biggest sellers' will each be rewarded with a vignette by Martin Woodcock, whose work will be well known to a great number of our members from his illustrations in books such as the *Field guide to the birds of South-East Asia* and *The Birds of Africa*, his many illustrations in the *Bulletin*, as well as for the paintings he has generously donated in recent years to the Club's annual raffle at our AGM. The next top ten sellers will each receive a pack of greetings cards by artist Clive Byers.

For more draw tickets please apply to the promoter stating your requirements.

The winning tickets will be drawn on 17th October 1991. Please return all stubs and monies to the promoter: Dick Filby, 40 Onley Street, Norwich NR2 2EB, UK to arrive by October 1st. Please make cheques payable to the OBC, and cross them 'not transferable'. If you would like a receipt for your money, or a full list of prize winners you should send an SAE to the Promoter as above.

Membership Subscription Rate to Increase

OBC subscription rates will be increased from 1 January 1992 after four years at the current rate.

Since this rate was set in 1988 costs of running the Club have continued to rise, particularly the cost of posting publications to members. In addition UK Value Added Tax has recently changed from 15% to 17.5%. Council has made a commitment to improve its publications which will inevitably mean higher expenditure. This policy

has commenced with the inclusion of a colour plate in *Forktail* 6 and there are plans to upgrade the *Bulletin*. The Club continues to operate the Honorary Membership Fund and to ensure that as much cash as is reasonably possible is channelled into the Conservation Fund to be put towards survey grants and other projects.

These factors have contributed to the decision that membership subscription rates cannot be maintained for a fifth year. It is hoped that all members will wish to continue to support the Club. We expect that the new rates will apply for several years.

From 1st January 1992, the new rates will be:-

Ordinary Member	£12.00 p.a.
Reduced Rate Member ¹ for nationals in Oriental countries.	£8.00 p.a.
Supporting Member ² for an Ordinary Member and a national in an Oriental country.	£20.00 p.a.
Corporate Member for libraries and institutions.	£20.00 p.a.

¹ From 1st January 1992, the reduced rate will be available for all nationals in Oriental countries. It would be greatly appreciated if other residents in these countries would pay the ordinary rate to assist us with defraying the additional costs of postage.

² The supporting member is a new membership category which has been introduced to accommodate the increasing number of members who pay for a friend in the Orient. We hope that this new category may also become popular with members living outside the Orient who might like to pay the subscription of and possibly correspond with a bird-watcher living in the Orient who could not otherwise become a member because of currency regulations or other reasons. The Club will maintain a list of interested bird-watchers who are not eligible for Honorary Membership but who could be assisted through this scheme. Supporting members will be sent the name and address of the member they are assisting.

New membership renewal slips will be sent out with the Autumn Bulletin and the Treasurer would be grateful if those with existing standing orders or those willing to set up standing orders afresh would complete the new form and return it as soon as possible thereafter, in order that instructions can be in place at the relevant bank by 1st January 1992.

Also with the next bulletin, those paying subscriptions by credit to the bank accounts in India and the USA will be advised of the local equivalents of the new sterling membership rates.

Finally, if any member has a query with his/her subscription payment for this year or, if anyone has not received recent issues of the *Bulletin* or *Forktail*, please advise the Membership Secretary.

Club's Representative in India Changes

OBC welcomes Mr Prakash Gole, President of the Indian Ecological Society, as the Club's new Representative in India. He takes over from Taej Mundkur who has had to stand down because of a move to Kuala Lumpur to take up a post as Project Officer - Waterbirds with the Asian Wetland Bureau. Taej has made a great contribution to the Club as Representative and we wish him well in his new job.

New T-shirt features Blue Pitta

This year the Club is offering a T-shirt featuring a full colour painting of the Blue Pitta by Martin Woodcock. It is the first time we have produced such high quality T-shirts, but expect them to be extremely popular. Many members will have seen the painting as it is one Martin very kindly donated to the Club in 1989 as a prize in our annual AGM raffle. The T-shirts cost £11 (£13 airmail) and are available in large and extra large sizes. OBC sweatshirts and other items are also available. Please use the OBC sales form enclosed with this Bulletin and return to the Club's address.

OBC Links up with the Bird and Wildlife Bookshop

In a new development for the Club, a link has been established with the new Bird and Wildlife Bookshop in London. All book sales will be dealt with through them, although the Club's sales service will remain for T-shirts and other Club items as well as back-copies of Bulletins and Journals.

OBC will still earn money through book sales. For every publication purchased by a Club member from the Bird and Wildlife Bookshop, using the book list and order form enclosed with this Bulletin, a donation of 10% of the book's value will be made to the Club by the shop.

The new arrangements will bring benefits to members in two other ways; an increased range of books available and a more professional service. The new bookshop is being run by Andrew Johnson, who previously worked with the well-known London bookshop Sotheran's of Sackville Street, and John Cahillane. Sotheran's will no longer be dealing in new natural history titles and the new Bird and Wildlife Bookshop is taking over their extensive range of natural history books, which will be extended and kept right up to date. They are well-experienced and have all facilities for dealing with mail orders and their service will be much more efficient for members.

Details of postal arrangements are given on the Bird and Wildlife Bookshop list and order form enclosed with this Bulletin. Orders using this leaflet should be sent directly to them at 2 - 4 Prince's Arcade, Piccadilly, London SW1Y 6DS.

The shop will also give the 10% donation to OBC for any sales made to personal callers. Please ask that they do this - the shop's sales staff may wish to check names against the Club's membership list.

Another benefit of the arrangement will be the attendance of the Bird and Wildlife Bookshop at most of the Club's UK meetings. They have already confirmed that they will attend the summer meeting at Blakeney, and the AGM in London.

Oriental Bird Club to attend British Birdwatching Fair

The British Birdwatching Fair, to be held this year at Rutland Water on the weekend of 30 and 31 August and 1 September, has become one of the major events in the birdwatching calendar in the UK. All aspects of birdwatching are included and stands range from those selling equipment or birdwatching holidays to those representing birdwatching societies and conservation organisations. This year the Club will have its own stand which will allow us to attract new members, raise money for the conservation fund, and provide an information service to British birdwatchers who are planning a visit to the Orient. People are required to help on this stand and any members planning to visit the fair who would be prepared to assist for a couple of hours are asked to contact the Publicity Officer (Nigel Lindsey) at the Club's address.

WildWings Travel supports Conservation Fund



OBC was delighted to receive £125 from WildWings Travel as a result of a special scheme the company has set up.

WildWings donates to the Club 1% of the total cost of travel arrangements booked through WildWings including flights, car hire, or package holidays. It applies to all bookings, be they simply to the Scilly Isles in the UK or to destinations further afield. It does of course depend on members identifying themselves as such when they make their booking.

WildWings specialise in the best value flights, car hire and package holidays etc for birdwatchers. Please note that WildWings have moved to: 21 Penn Street, Bristol BS1 3AU, UK. They can be contacted by telephone on 0272 259999 or 0603 767757.

Bird Recording Services Offer on Bird Songs Tape

The *Field Guide to the Bird Songs of South East Asia* on two cassettes is now out of print. Bird Recording Services (WildSounds) will donate £3 per guide sold through the OBC to the Club's Conservation Fund. The price of the cassettes (including postage and packing) is: £14 for UK, £15.50 for rest of Europe and £18 for rest of world.

Members should send their orders with payment to Bird Recording Services, OBC Offer, P. O. Box 309, West Byfleet, Surrey, KT14 7YA, UK.

Report on AGM in London

On 1 December 1990 the Club's AGM was held in the main lecture theatre at the Zoological Society meeting rooms in London.

Jonathan Eames described the visits that he made, with British and Vietnamese ornithologists, to four areas in Vietnam: Nam Bai Cat Tien National Park; the Da-Lat

Lang-Bian highlands; Bach Ma National Park; and the Ho Ke Go area. They found a number of interesting species including Germain's Peacock-Pheasant *Polyplectron germaini*, Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus*, White-winged Duck *Cairina scutulata*, Collared Laughingthrush *Garrulax yersini*, a population of 600 + Crested Argus *Rheinardia ocellata*, Vietnamese Pheasant *Lophura hatinhensis* and obtained a moribund Imperial Pheasant *L. imperialis*.

Jonathan described how all four areas are threatened by a variety of problems including trapping, rattan extraction, charcoal extraction and orchid collection.

This was followed by two talks from Finn Danielssen, the first describing the work of DAFIF, a Danish organisation which concentrates on international bird conservation issues. They have done a lot of work collating information on lesser-known sites that remains hidden in people's notebooks. They have focused their attentions on particular countries, especially the Philippines and Nepal.

After the interval he described his work on the mangrove forests of Sumatra. These are a very rich habitat in the region and contain a large number of bird species. One can find Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus*, Milky *Mycteria cinerea* and Storm's Storks *Ciconia stormi* as well as large numbers of waders including Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus* and Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*. There has been a massive increase in the loss of these forests in the last 20 years and Finn described his work in trying to identify sustainable economic uses for these forests which may help to conserve them.

The meeting finished with the draw for the raffle and was followed by a social gathering.

Nigel Lindsey

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Conservation Fund



Applications invited for increased Forktail Leica Award

Applications are invited for the 1991 Forktail Leica Award. *Leica Camera* has generously donated £1,000 for this award in 1991. The Forktail-Leica Award will be given to a project which fits one or more of the following categories.

1. A forest survey useful for conservation
2. A survey or study of globally-threatened species
3. A study of a little-known protected area
4. Conservation education which has an emphasis on birds

Project applications are welcomed from individuals and non-affiliated groups, as well as groups organised by a conservation organisation or university.

The closing date for applications is 1st October 1991. The winning project will be announced at the AGM in December.

Survey Grants - Applications Welcomed

Applications are welcomed for survey grants at any time of the year. Grants will normally be up to £300, but applications for larger amounts will also be considered.

Examples of surveys include:

1. Contributing to checklists of poorly-known protected areas.
2. Surveys of habitat types which are currently unprotected in the country concerned.
3. Surveys of threatened or little-known species.
4. Identification of migration stop-over sites.

Applications, for the Forktail Leica Award and survey grants which should include a summary of objectives, details of implementation, and a budget should be sent to OBC's Conservation Officer, Carol Inskipp, at the Club's address. Applications from nationals in the Oriental region (which can include the support of an on-going project) are particularly encouraged.

OBC Conservation Contact

All correspondence regarding the Club's conservation fund should be addressed to Carol Inskipp, OBC Conservation Officer, at the Club's address.

Report on Negombo Lagoon, Sri Lanka

A preliminary report has been received from Rex De Silva who, with the help of an OBC survey grant, carried out an ornithological survey of Negombo Lagoon in Sri Lanka between May 1990 and January 1991. Rex was successful in making a total census of wintering gulls and terns. He found that the lagoon is probably the most important site in Sri Lanka's wet zone for these birds in winter, and is also used by migrant waders. Species recorded include Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus*, Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*, Greater Crested Tern *Sterna bergii*, Lesser Crested Tern *S. bengalensis* and Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*. Breeding species include Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, Little Cormorant *Phalacrocorax niger* and Indian Shag *P. fuscicollis*. Although courtship and copulation were observed amongst terns, no nesting took place in 1990. The lagoon is badly threatened by siltation, pollution, tourism and in the long term by the pressures of the ever-expanding human population. Rex has already submitted a report to the Greater Colombo Economic Commission outlining the threats to the lagoon and recommending that no development be permitted in the lagoon's northern sector where most of the mudflats and sea-grass beds lie.

Survey of forest birds and their habitats in Vietnam

The Vietnamese Forest Birds Working Group has been donated £300 as a contribution towards their survey work in 1991. This will focus on five of the least known and most threatened bird species in Viet Nam: White-winged Duck *Cairina scutulata*, Orange-necked Partridge *Arborophila davidi*, Edwards's Pheasant *Lophura edwardsi*, Grey-crowned Crocias *Crocias langbianis* and Black-hooded Laughing-thrush *Garrulax milleti*. Most of the fieldwork will occur in proposed and existing protected areas including Nam Bai Cat Tien National Park and the Khe Ao area of Bach Ma National Park. Threats to the bird species and their habitat will be identified and management recommendations will be made.

Survey of Chitlang forest, Nepal

A survey grant of £300 has been donated to three members of the Nepal Birdwatching Club to survey the breeding and wintering forest birds of the Chitlang area, which lies in the central Himalayas in Nepal, and to make recommendations for its protection. The survey will be carried out by Lalit Lalchan, Rabindra Manandhar and Prabin Shrestha. Chitlang still has a considerable extent of subtropical broadleaved forest in reasonable condition. Although such forests once covered much of the lower hills of central and eastern Nepal, they are now much diminished and are one of the most seriously threatened forest types in the country.

Reeves's Pheasant to be studied in China

Professor Wu Zhikang from the Guizhou Academy of Sciences has been awarded £300 to survey Reeves's Pheasant *Syrnaticus reevesii* and its habitat. Reeves's Pheasant is

an endangered species which is endemic to China. Wu Zhikang will carry out his survey in the Tuode forestry region of Weining on the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, which is one of the last strongholds of the species. He will collect information on the abundance of the pheasant and its ecology, as well as recording the other bird species and making habitat observations. On the basis of his survey he will be making recommendations for conservation measures including the establishment of a nature reserve.



Reeves's Pheasant *Syrmaticus reevesii* by Adam Davison.

Environmental Education boosted in Nepal

Fieldwork equipment and a textbook guide to carrying out fieldwork with children, with a total value of £115 has been given to the Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness (ECCA), an environmental education organisation in Nepal. This equipment is impossible to obtain in the country. ECCA run camps (fieldwork courses) for Nepali schoolchildren and for university students who are potential future teachers for the camps. The main aims are to raise awareness of the environment and of conservation issues. Camps have been held in the Kathmandu Valley, at several Nepalese protected areas including the Royal Chitwan National Park and Kosi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, and recently, in Bhutan.



News and Views

WORLD HERITAGE SITE IN DANGER

The East Rapti Irrigation Project, funded by the Asian Development Bank, is threatening the famous Royal Chitwan National Park in Nepal. The project, which will divert 75 per cent of the water from the Rapti River, is in violation of the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act which prohibits diversion of rivers or streams flowing in a park or reserve. This and other concerns has prompted the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas of IUCN to list Chitwan as a 'Threatened Protected Area'. The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, in its *Wildlife Nepal* newsletter has publicly stated its opposition to the project and is concerned that it will have a major impact on the wildlife, local communities and tourism.

(Source: *Wildlife Nepal* January/February 1991)

MORE GOOD NEWS ON BENGAL FLORICAN

Asad Rahmani has recently written to the Club with the news that he has located a small population Bengal Florican *Houbaropsis bengalensis* in Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary in India. Three males were recorded during the survey, which also covered Dudwa National Park where he found most of the old florican territories were still occupied. The species was once widely distributed in the plains adjacent to the foothills of the Himalayas, but within the subcontinent it is now restricted to a few isolated pockets of protected grassland in India and Nepal.

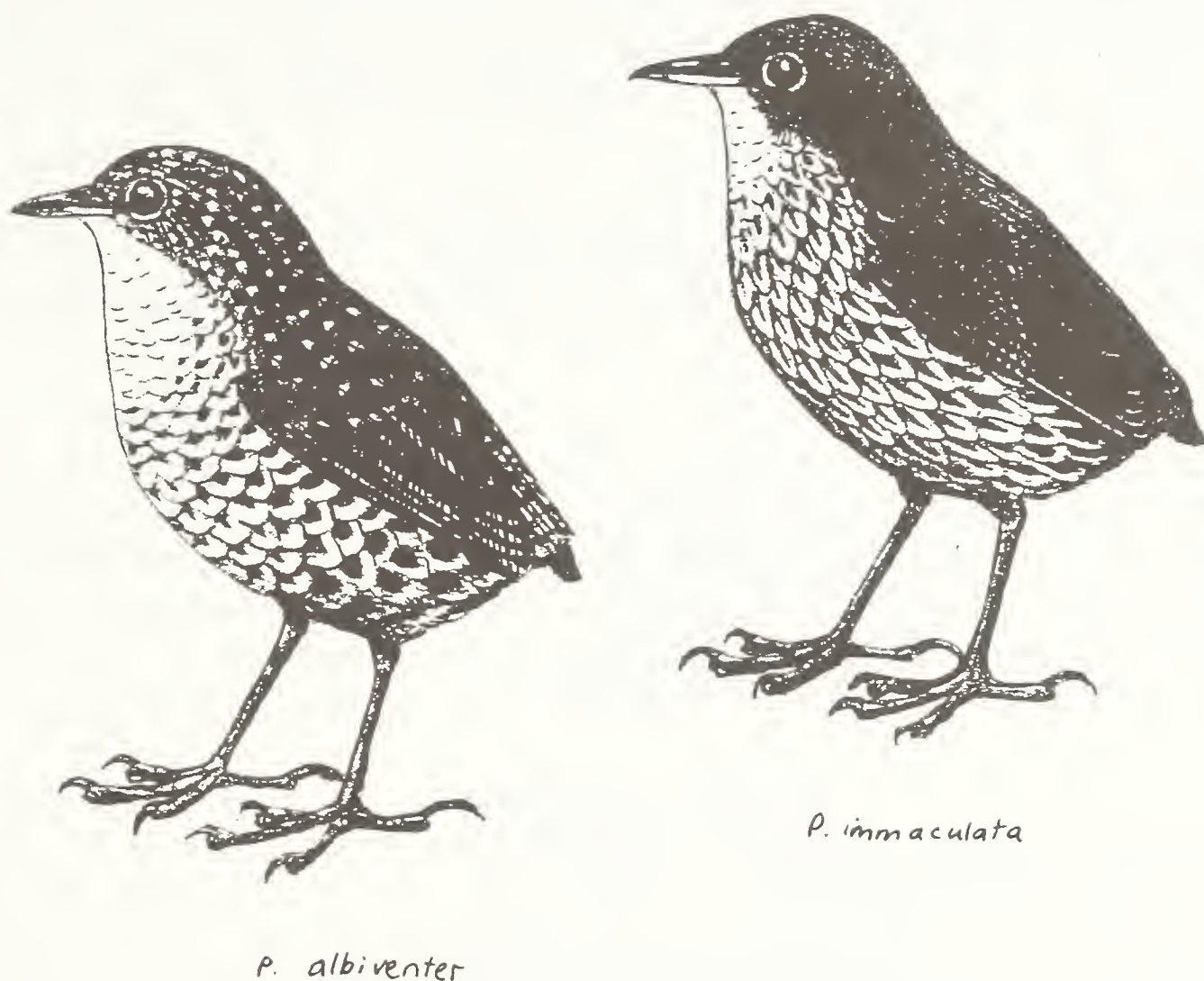
NEW SPECIES OF WREN-BABBLER FOR THE WORLD

Remarkably, a new species of wren-babbler, *Pnoepyga immaculata*, has been described from Nepal. Jochen Martens and Siegfried Eck, in a recent issue of the *Journal für Ornithologie*, have described the species on the basis of its distinctive territorial song and subtle plumage differences in comparison with Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga albiventer* and Pygmy Wren-Babbler *P. pusilla*. The species has not yet been given an English name.

The scaly feathers of the underparts are longer and more pointed than those of Scaly-breasted and Pygmy, with the darker centres giving a streaked rather than spotted appearance, and the upperparts have an olive rather than warm brown tinge. *Immaculata* is the same size as Scaly-breasted, but other differences - a longer bill, and plain (rather than spotted with buff) head, back and wing coverts - should make field identification possible with good views.

Four museum specimens are known, from the presumed breeding grounds in west-central (Thakkhola) and East (Ting Sang La) Nepal and winter quarters in the Terai lowlands, and it must have been overlooked by ornithologists and birdwatchers who have visited these areas. The authors note that, although there are slight ecological differences, with Scaly-breasted inhabiting forest at higher altitudes, both species have been found on territory at close range. Pygmy inhabits different microhabitats, especially in proximity to running water, in the same altitudinal belt as *immaculata*. Because of its apparent scarcity, and the loss of forest at its preferred altitude, the authors argue that more detailed information on its distribution and biology is urgently needed.

(Source: Martens, J. and Eck, S. 1991. *Pnoepyga immaculata* n. sp., eine neue bodenbewohnende Timalie aus dem Nepal - Himalaya *J. Orn.* 132: 179-198.)



Pnoepyga albiventer and *P. immaculata* from painting in *J. Orn* by K. Rehbinder.

THREAT TO SAUNDERS'S GULL COLONIES

The two main breeding sites of Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi*, one of the world's rarest gulls, are threatened according to recent information from WWF Hong Kong.

At the first, at Yancheng Nature Reserve in Jiangsu Province, the seven recently-found colonies are threatened by a World Bank-funded project to develop shrimp farming and agricultural activities. No impact assessment has been carried out, and it is feared that the colonies will be lost if an undisturbed strip of coastal saltmarsh is not retained.

At the other main site, Shuangtaizihekou National Nature Reserve in Liaoning, coastal reclamation was already underway when 130 nests were discovered and it is feared that breeding habitat will be lost unless the programme is reassessed and management work carried out. WWF Hong Kong report that a proposal to establish and manage a nature reserve in an area designated for further rice cultivation has been sympathetically received by the county authorities.

(Source: *Asian Wetland News* 2 (3):16-17.)

GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR BALI STARLING

At last some encouraging news comes from Bali Barat National Park on the conservation of the Bali Starling *Leucopsar rothschildi*. ICBP reports that the population has recently been estimated at between 36 and 39 individuals. This is a considerable increase on the depressingly low estimate of between 13 and 18 birds made during the autumn 1990 census. The remaining wild population is known to have had an exceptionally good breeding season, helped by the extended wet season. Most important, however, has been the enhanced efforts made by the Bali Barat National Park staff to protect the species from poachers. Groups of poachers have been driven away by park guards on a number of occasions this year. Nevertheless, the species remains one of the world's most threatened birds and no effort should be spared to prevent its extinction in the wild.

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A working supplement to duPont's *Philippine birds*

It is now twenty years since duPont's *Philippine birds* was first published. This article summarises additions, changes and corrections to the Philippine bird list since that time as well as pointing out some of the errors in the book which can be confusing to field observers.

A checklist of birds of the Philippines has just been published⁴ and a field guide is in preparation but is far from completion. The only available identification guide which, when published, covered all of the birds of this interesting archipelago is duPont's (1971) *Philippine birds*⁵. However, duPont's work is now out of date because of newly recorded species and especially because of a number of taxonomic and distributional changes. Also the text and plates contain a number of errors (some of which have been highlighted in a little-known journal⁶) which are likely to confuse or mislead observers. The literature on Philippine birds is very extensive; virtually all relevant references are included in the recent *Bibliography*¹², and more recent ones are in the *Check-list*.

This paper is intended for use as a supplement to duPont's book and attempts to summarise additions, changes and corrections.

Species now accepted but not included by duPont:

Bonin Petrel *Pterodroma hypoleuca*, Red-tailed Tropicbird *Phaethon rubricauda*, Javan Pond Heron *Ardeola speciosa*, Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, Gadwall *Anas strepera*, Baer's Pochard *Aythya baeri*, Merlin *Falco columbarius*, Common Ringed-Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Bristle-thighed Curlew *Numenius tahitiensis*, Little Stint *Calidris minuta*, Red Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicaria*, Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*¹⁵, Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris*¹⁵, Aleutian Tern *Sterna aleutica*, Black-nest Swiftlet *Collocalia maxima*³, Mossy-nest Swiftlet *Collocalia salangana*³, Grey-rumped Treeswift *Hemiprocnis longipennis*, Siberian Blue Robin *Luscinia cyane*, Panay Striped-Babbler *Stachyris latistriata*⁹, Ijima's Warbler *Phylloscopus ijimae*, Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*, Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa dauurica*, Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* and Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*.

Species removed from the Philippines list:

Band-bellied Crane *Porzana paykullii*, Eurasian Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*, Grey-headed Flycatcher *Culicicapa ceylonensis* and Black-faced Bunting *Emberiza spodocephala*.

Taxonomic and nomenclatural changes:
duPont

Dickinson et al. (1991)

(a) forms now split

<i>Threskiornis aethiopia</i>	>	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	Black-headed Ibis
<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	>	<i>P. ptilorhyncus</i>	Oriental Honeybuzzard
<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	>	<i>C. spilonotus</i>	Eastern Marsh Harrier
<i>Megapodius freycinet</i>	>	<i>M. cumingi</i>	Tabon Scrubfowl
<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	>	<i>C. japonica</i>	Japanese Quail
<i>Tringa incanas brevipes</i>	>	<i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>	Grey-tailed Tattler
<i>Anous tenuirostris</i>	>	<i>A. minutus</i>	Black Noddy
<i>Gallicolumba luzonica criniger</i>	>	<i>*G. criniger</i>	Mindanao Bleeding-heart
<i>+ leytensis</i>	>	<i>*G. menagei</i>	Sulu Bleeding-heart
<i>Gallicolumba luzonica menagei</i>	>	<i>*G. keayi</i>	Negros Bleeding-heart
<i>Gallicolumba luzonica keayi</i>	>	<i>*G. platenae</i>	Mindoro Bleeding-heart
<i>Gallicolumba luzonica platenae</i>	>	<i>*P. verticalis</i>	Blue-winged Racquet-tail
<i>Prioniturus montanus verticalis</i>	>	<i>C. russatus</i>	Gould's Bronze-Cuckoo
<i>Chrysococcyx malayanus</i>	>	<i>*O. mirus</i>	Mindanao Scops-Owl
<i>Otus scops mirus</i>	>	<i>*O. mindorensis</i>	Mindoro Scops-Owl
<i>Otus scops mindorensis</i>	>	<i>*O. longicornis</i>	Luzon Scops-Owl
<i>Otus scops longicornis</i>	>	<i>O. elegans</i>	Ryukyu Scops-Owl
<i>Otus scops calayensis</i>	>		
<i>Otus scops romblonis + cuyensis</i>	>	<i>O. mantananensis</i>	Mantanani Scops-Owl
<i>+ sibuensis</i>	>	<i>*O. fuliginosus</i>	Palawan Scops-Owl
<i>Otus bakkamoena fuliginosus</i>	>		
<i>Otus bakkamoena everetti + megalotis</i>	>	<i>*O. megalotis</i>	Philippine Scops-Owl
<i>+ nigrorum</i>	>		
<i>Caprimulgus macrurus manillensis</i>	>	<i>C. manillensis</i>	Philippine Nightjar
<i>+ delacouri</i>	>		Whitehead's Mountain Swiftlet
<i>Collocalia brevirostris whiteheadi</i>	>	<i>*C. whiteheadi</i> (Mt Apo & Mt Data only)	
<i>+ origenis</i>	>	<i>+C. vanikorensis amelis</i> (rest of range)	Island Swiftlet
<i>Collocalia vanikorensis amelis</i>	=	<i>C. vanikorensis amelis</i>	Philippine Swiftlet
	+ >	<i>*C. mearnsi</i>	Brown-backed Needletail
<i>Chaetura gigantea gigantea</i>	>	<i>Hirundapus giganteus</i>	

Taxonomic and nomenclatural changes:
duPont

Dickinson et al. (1991)

(a) forms now split (continued from previous page)

<i>Chaetura gigantea</i> dubia + manobo	>	<i>Hirundapus celebensis</i>	Purple Needletail
<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	>	<i>C. balasiensis</i>	Asian Palm-Swift
<i>Pitta brachyura moluccensis</i>	>	<i>P. moluccensis</i>	Blue-winged Pitta
<i>Oriolus xanthonotus steerii</i> + samarensis			
+ cinereogenys + basilanicus			
+ assimilis + albiloris	>	* <i>O. steerii</i>	Philippine Oriole
<i>Rhabdornis inornatus grandis</i>	>	* <i>R. grandis</i>	Long-billed Rhabdornis
<i>Stachyris capitalis nigrocapitata</i>			
+ affinis + boholensis	>	* <i>S. nigrocapitata</i>	Black-crowned Babbler
<i>Stachyris capitalis dennistouni</i>	>	* <i>S. dennistouni</i>	Golden-crowned Babbler
<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus harterti</i>	>	<i>A. stentoreus</i>	Clamorous Reed-Warbler
<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus orientalis</i>	>	<i>A. orientalis</i>	Oriental Reed-Warbler
<i>Locustella certhiola ochotensis</i>	>	<i>L. ochotensis</i>	Middendorf's Warbler
<i>Orthotomus atrogularis</i>	>	* <i>O. castaneiceps</i>	Philippine Tailorbird
<i>Orthotomus nigriceps samarensis</i>	>	* <i>O. samarensis</i>	Yellow-breasted Tailorbird
<i>Cettia diphone seebohmi</i>	>	* <i>Cettia seebohmi</i>	Luzon Bush-Warbler
<i>Bradypterus luteoventris seebohmi</i>	>	<i>B. seebohmi</i>	Russet Bush-Warbler
<i>Rhinomyias gularis</i>	>	* <i>R. albigularis</i>	White-throated Jungle-Flycatcher
<i>Muscicapra latirostris randi</i>	>	* <i>M. randi</i>	Ashy-breasted Flycatcher
<i>Pachycephala cinerea plateni</i>	>	<i>P. grisola</i>	Mangrove Whistler
<i>Pachycephala cinerea homeyeri</i>	>	<i>P. homeyeri</i>	White-vented Whistler
+ winchelli			
<i>Pachycephala cinerea albiventris</i>	>	* <i>P. albiventris</i>	Green-backed Whistler
+ crissalis + mindorensis			

(b) forms now lumped:

<i>Spilornis holospilus</i>	<	<i>Spilornis cheela holospilus</i>	Crested Serpent Eagle
<i>Hirundo striolata</i>	<	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>	Red-rumped Swallow

Taxonomic and nomenclatural changes:
duPont

Dickinson et al. (1991)

(c) changes in nomenclature:

<i>Podiceps ruficollis</i>	=	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Little Grebe
<i>Puffinus leucomelas</i>	=	<i>Calonectris leucomelas</i>	Streaked Shearwater
<i>Anhinga rufa</i>	=	<i>A. melanogaster</i>	Darter
<i>Perdix barbata</i>	=	<i>P. dauuricae</i>	Daurian Partridge
<i>Poliolimnas cinereus</i>	=	<i>Porzana cinerea</i>	White-browed Crane
<i>Tringa hypoleucos</i>	=	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Common Sandpiper
<i>Sterna zimmermanni</i>	=	<i>S. bernsteini</i>	Chinese Crested Tern
<i>Kakatoe haematuropygia</i>	=	<i>Cacatua haematuropygia</i>	Philippine Cockatoo
<i>Collocalia brevirostris palawanensis</i>	=	<i>C. vanikorensis palawanensis</i>	Purple Needletail
<i>Chaetura picina</i>	=	<i>Meansia picina</i>	White-throated Needletail
<i>Chaetura caudacuta</i>	=	<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	Ashy Tailorbird
<i>Orthotomus sepium</i>	=	<i>O. ruficeps</i>	Sunda Bush-Warbler
<i>Cettia montana</i>	=	<i>C. vulcania</i>	Ferruginous Flycatcher
<i>Muscicapa cinereiceps</i>	=	<i>M. ferruginea</i>	Blue-and-white Flycatcher
<i>Ficeduia cyanomelana</i>	=	<i>Cyanoptila cyanomelana</i>	

Taxa recognised as species by some authors, but not by Dickinson et al. (1991):

Dickinson et al.

<i>Milvus migrans</i>	>	<i>M. lineatus</i> ¹⁶	Black-eared Kite
<i>Spilornis cheela holospilus</i>	>	<i>*S. holospilus</i> ^{10, 16}	Philippine Serpent Eagle
<i>Turnix sylvatica celestinoi</i>	=	<i>T. maculosa celestinoi</i> ¹⁷	Red-backed Butonquail
<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>	>	<i>P. fulva</i> ^{10, 16}	Pacific Golden-Plover
<i>Himantopus himantopus leucocephalus</i>	>	<i>H. leucocephalus</i> ^{16, 18}	White-headed Stilt
<i>Larus argentatus</i>	>	<i>L. vegae</i> ⁷	Vega Gull
<i>Macropygia phasianella</i>	>	<i>M. tenuirostris</i> ^{16, 18}	Philippine Cuckoo-Dove
<i>Prioniturus montanus waterstradti</i>	>	<i>*P. waterstradti</i> ^{10, 16}	Mindanao Racquet-tail
<i>Cacomantis variolosus</i>	>	<i>C. sepulcralis</i> ^{16, 18}	Rusty-breasted Cuckoo
<i>Tyto capensis</i>	>	<i>T. longimembris</i> ^{2, 16, 18}	Eastern Grass-Owl

Other authors

Taxa recognised as species by some authors, but not by Dickinson et al. (1991) (continued from previous page) :

Dickinson et al.		Other authors	
<i>Batrachostomus javensis</i>	>	<i>B. affinis</i> ¹⁶	Blyth's Frogmouth
<i>Collocalia esculenta</i>	>	* <i>C. marginata</i> ¹⁶	Grey-rumped Swiftlet
<i>Collocalia vanikorensis palawanensis</i>	>	* <i>C. palawanensis</i> ¹⁶	Palawan Swiftlet
<i>Collocalia vanikorensis amelis</i>	>	<i>C. amelis</i> ¹⁶	Grey Swiftlet
<i>Collocalia fuciphaga</i>	>	<i>C. germani</i> ¹⁶	Germain's Swiftlet
<i>Apus affinis</i>	>	<i>A. nipalensis</i> ¹⁶	House Swift
<i>Ceyx erithacus rufidorsus</i>	>	<i>C. rufidorsa</i> ^{2, 10, 16}	Rufous-backed Kingfisher
<i>Aceros leucocephalus waldeni</i>	>	* <i>A. waldeni</i> ¹¹	Withed-billed Hornbill
<i>Penelopides panini panini + ticaensis</i>	>	* <i>P. panini</i> ^{11, 16}	Tarictic Hornbill
<i>Penelopides panini affinis</i>	>		
+ <i>basilana</i>	>	* <i>P. affinis</i> ^{11, 16}	Mindanao Hornbill
<i>Penelopides panini manillae + subnigra</i>	>	* <i>P. manillae</i> ^{11, 16}	Luzon Hornbill
<i>Penelopides panini mindorensis</i>	>	* <i>P. mindorensis</i> ^{11, 16}	Mindoro Hornbill
<i>Penelopides panini samarensis</i>	>	* <i>P. samarensis</i> ¹⁶	Samar Hornbill
<i>Hirundo daurica</i>	>	<i>Hirundo striolata</i> ^{16, 18}	Striated Swallow
<i>Coracina morio</i>	>	* <i>C. mindanensis</i> ^{10, 16, 18}	Black-bibbed Cicadabird
<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>	>	<i>P. igneus</i> ^{2, 10, 13, 16}	Fiery Minivet
<i>Dicrurus hottentottus striatus</i>	>		
+ <i>samarensis</i>	>	<i>D. bracteatus</i> ^{16, 18}	Spangled Drongo
<i>Oriolus steerii albiloris</i>	>	* <i>O. albiloris</i> ^{2, 10, 16}	White-lored Oriole
<i>Sitta frontalis oenochlamys + mesoleuca</i>	>		
+ <i>isarog + lilacea + apo + zamboanga</i>	>	* <i>S. oenochlamys</i> ^{10, 16}	Sulphur-billed Nuthatch
<i>Orthotomus castaneiceps frontalis</i>	>		
+ <i>mearnsi</i>	>	* <i>O. frontalis</i> ¹⁶	Rufous-fronted Tailorbird
<i>Orthotomus cucullatus heterolaemus</i>	>	* <i>O. heterolaemus</i> ¹⁶	Rufous-headed Tailorbird
<i>Cettia diphone</i>	>	<i>C. canturians</i> ^{10, 13, 16}	Manchurian Bush-Warbler
<i>Anthus novaeseelandiae</i>	>	<i>A. rufulus</i> ^{8, 16}	Paddyfield Pipit

> = Species split
 < = Species lumped
 * = Philippine endemic species

Some of the taxa in the above list, especially those in Sibley and Monroe (1990), are probably not justifiably separated, e.g. *Milvus lineatus* is split based on a pers. comm. suggestion with no further amplification. Many others refer to allopatric populations where the recognition as separate species may be largely a matter of personal opinion. On the other hand, note that most of these taxa were originally described as separate species and were lumped, often without discussion, during the early part of the century when it became apparent that too many species were being recognised. The Philippine Cuckoo-Dove was combined with a complex of forms stretching from Sumatra to Australia, despite big gaps between some adjacent forms. Chasen¹ took 'a very broad view of a "species"', with an 'extensive linking of geographical races.' He admitted that 'Many of the combinations adopted are novel', despite the lack of published justification. The check-list gives reasons in footnote form on why most of these changes have not been adopted; the list is provided to facilitate further reading on these alternative views. Kemp's discussion of the hornbills and Sutter's description of the morphological similarity of *celestinoi* to other races of *Turnix maculosa* are particularly recommended.

Corrections:

The following captions on the plates should be transposed:

- P.28 White-eared Brown-Dove *Phapitreron leucotis* and Amethyst Brown-Dove *P. amethystina*
- P.34 Guaiabero *Bolbopsittacus lunulatus* and Colasisi *Loriculus philippensis*
- P.42 Fork-tailed (White-rumped) Swift *Apus pacificus* and House Swift *A. affinis*
- P.56 Streaked Ground-Babbler *Ptilocichla mindanensis* and Falcated Ground-Babbler *P. falcata*
- P.68 Grey-backed (Luzon) Tailorbird *Orthotomus derbianus* and Dark-necked (Philippine) Tailorbird *O. atrogularis* (= *castaneiceps*)
- P.80 Crimson (Yellow-backed) Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja* and Little Spiderhunter *Arachnothera longirostra*
- P.81 Bicolored Flowerpecker *Dicaeum bicolor* and Striped Flowerpecker *D. aeruginosum*.

The pictures on Plate 44 of Malaysian (=Blue-eared) Kingfisher *Alcedo meninting* and Blue-banded (=Indigo-banded) Kingfisher *A. (=Ceyx) cyanopecta* are very confusing and not compatible with the text.



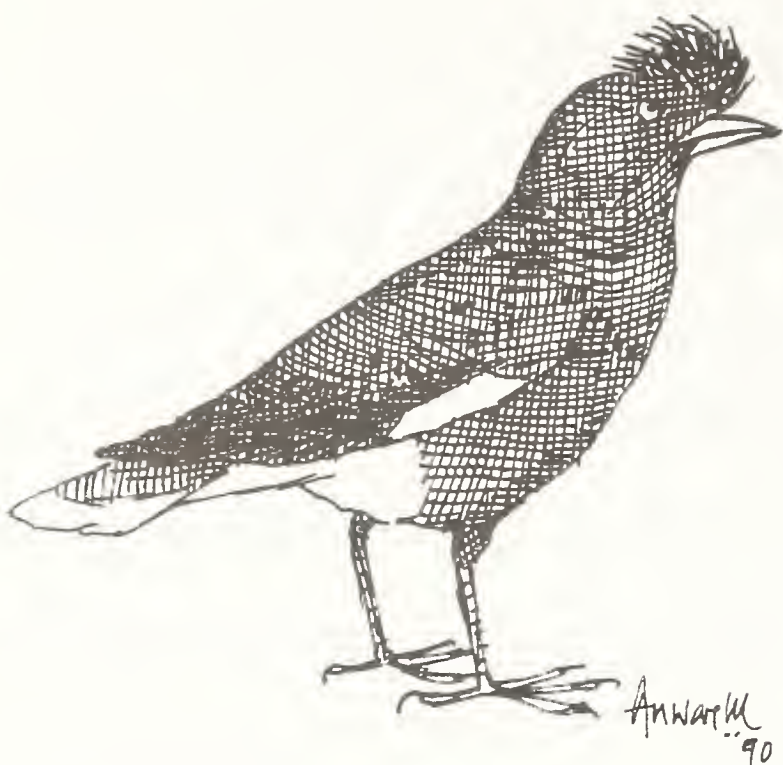
Rough-Crested Cuckoo *Phaenicophaeus superciliosus* by Linda Schröyer.

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J. Scharringa, Meerkoethof 8, 3582 DA Utrecht, The Netherlands.

T. P. Inskipp, 1 Herneside, March Road, Welney, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, PE14 9SB, UK.



New for Assam: the White-vented Myna

In this article the author gives his account of the occurrence of the White-vented Myna in Assam, a bird first recorded there by him in 1986. He now knows it to be resident and questions whether a recent extension of the species' range accounts for his interesting observations.

The White-vented Myna *Acridotheres grandis* is a recent addition to the birds of Assam. The bird is poorly documented in the Indian subcontinent and its ecology is very little understood. Its previously recorded distribution included Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura and Mizoram. The known habitat is semi-cultivation, village environs and open country with elephant grass, and it occurs from the foothills up to c. 1300m¹.

During field surveys in north-eastern India, I have seen the species at many places where it previously has not been recorded. On 18 February 1986, I recorded it for the first time in the state of Assam at the Barail Reserve Forest.

My records from Assam and parts of Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur cover the period between February 1986 and January 1990. Confirmed sightings are listed in Table 1.

The White-vented Myna is about the same size as the Common Myna *A. tristis*, the ubiquitous bird of south and south-east Asia. The White-vented Myna is almost jet black with slightly lighter underparts. A large white patch in the wing is especially conspicuous in flight. The vent, under tail-coverts and tail-tip are white. A prominent tuft of erect black feathers on the forehead at the base of the bill, and wholly orange-red bill are other diagnostic clues. Legs and feet are yellow. Both sexes are alike.

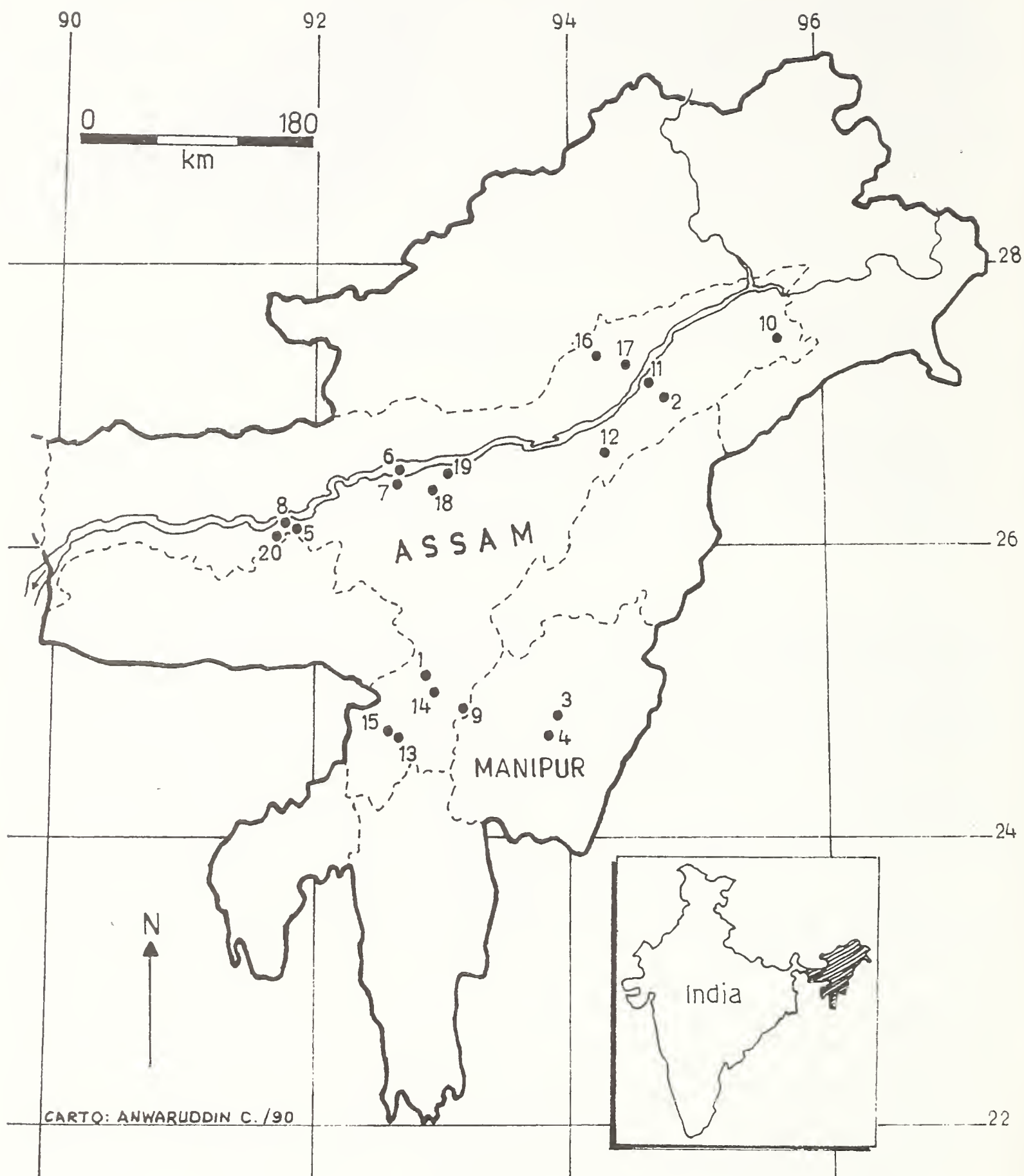
The birds are sometimes confused with the dark race of the Jungle Myna *Acridotheres fuscus fumidus*, particularly in the upper Assam area. However, the White-vented Myna's longer tuft of feathers on the forehead and the absence of bluish-black colouration at the base of the lower mandible are the keys. On closer observation different body-colour is also apparent, although this can be confusing if you are looking at a wet Jungle Myna which also appears black.

While rare in Assam, the White-vented Myna seems to have a wide distribution. I have recorded it on both banks of the Brahmaputra River. In the high hills of the Barail range of North Cachar Hills and Cachar, I have seen the species in tropical evergreen and sub-tropical broadleaf hill forest, as well as in the Barak Valley. I have recorded the birds near two wetland sites, Bauwva beel and Deepor beel, in open countryside, grasslands, in riverine tracts and cultivated fields. The recorded districts are Lakhimpur, Tinsukia, Sibsagar, Jorhat, Nagaon, Kamrup, North Cachar Hills, Cachar, and Hailakanndi. Birds have also been observed in trees in Guwahati city and environs where in May they were nesting in the holes in the raintree *Enterolobium saman*. It is widely distributed in Manipur and is very common in the city of Imphal, where it virtually replaces the Common Myna, showing the same adaptability, occupying houses, rooftops and gardens.

Table 1.

Field Observations of White-vented Myna

Locality	Site No.	Date	Group Size	Remarks
Dimbruchara, Barail Reserve Forest, North Cachar Hills District	1	18.02.86	2	In flight
Sibsagar Town	2	14.02.88	2 + 2	Feeding on Simul flowers
Imphal City	3	07 to 13 04.88		Many seen, singly, in pairs, small parties and large loose flocks
Between Imphal & Moirang	4	12.04.88	c. 12	In cultivated fields
Guwahati City	5	20.01.89 23.01.89	2 2	Perched on tree
Burhachapori Reserve Forest	6	17.03.89 18.03.89	2 + 2 2	Feeding on Simul flowers
Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary	7	10.03.89		Small flock settling on hedge
Guwahati City	8	08.05.89 07.06.89	2+2+2 1	Nesting in rain tree. In <i>Ficus religiosa</i> tree
Upper Jiri Reserve Forest, Cachar	9	03.07.89	c. 6	In flight
Digboi, Tinsukia District	10	20.07.89	2	In flight & in <i>Ficus</i>
Disangmukh, Sibsagar District	11	23.07.89	c. 12	In Simul tree
Between Mariani & Chinnamora, Jorhat District	12	24.07.89	1	In paddyfield
Bauwva beel, Hailakandi District	13	21.10.89	2	Attending cattle
Between Dalu & Balachara, Cachar District	14	24.10.89	1	On ground
Hailakandi Town	15	25.10.89	2	In field
Boginaki, Lakhimpur district	16	18.11.89	1	
Between Ghilamora & Dhakuakhana, Lakhimpur District	17	18.11.89	2	
Missa, Nagaon District	18	30.11.89	1+2+3	Attending cattle
Kaliabor, Nagaon District	19	30.11.89	1	Perched on buffalo back
Deepor beel, near Guwahati	20	21.01.90	2+2	Attending cattle & in paddyfield.



Map 1 showing localities where White-vented Jungle Mynas were seen. Numbers refer to Table 1.

The birds are sometimes seen feeding in association with Common Mynas, Jungle Mynas, Asian Pied Starlings *Sturnus contra* and Chestnut-tailed Starlings *S. malabaricus*. However, the White-vented Myna tends to move around in pairs, occasionally in small parties of six to 12 birds. In Imphal city, large but loose flocks are also seen. It is rather shy, in relation to other mynas.

I have observed the species feeding on insects in the fields and wet meadows, where like other mynas it follows and attends grazing cattle and buffalos. It also feeds in trees where I have seen it take nectar from the bright red flowers of silk cotton or simal trees *Bombax ceiba*.

When I first noticed the birds I surmised that the species might be a winter visitor to Assam from neighbouring Nagaland and Manipur, as all the sightings were recorded between January and March. However, the observation of nesting birds at Guwahati in May confirmed that it is resident and breeds in Assam. In the months of June, July and October sightings have also been made in different areas of Assam, again suggesting that it is resident. Ali and Ripley¹ considered that it was doubtfully sedentary.

During my year-round bird survey in Sibsagar district, I saw the bird only during the winter months. This suggests that in places the bird is also locally migratory.

Although I might have overlooked the species on many earlier occasions, my frequent sightings in the last few years in widely scattered places of Assam lead me to think that an extension of range by the species may have occurred in recent years.

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Anwaruddin Choudhury, Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil), Dhakuakhana, Near Gate no 1 of Nehru Stadium, Islampur Road, Guwahati 781 007, Assam, India.

Rising Times of Birds

Every good ornithologist knows that it is necessary to be out in the field early. In this short article the author gives the results of his studies into just how early birds are active in relation to sun rise and how it varies through the year.

In the winter of 1986 I decided to observe rising times of various species of the most common birds found in the Civil Lines, Kota, Rajasthan, where I live. Though Kota is a very polluted city, the area I studied is comparatively better vegetated, being part of the palace of the former rulers of Kota. My study route was 800m long and I walked it three times every morning.

The area has a large variety of trees and shrubs and a small irrigation channel which frequently floods low-lying patches attracting kingfishers Alcedinidae, wagtails and pipits Motacillidae. There are many beehives in the area attracting Oriental Honey-buzzards *Pernis ptilorhyncus*.

I kept notes on all birds in my study area, their movements, first and last sightings of migratory species, breeding cycles of resident birds and their roost sites and roosting behaviour. Almost every day the time of the first call or first sighting of 23 species of birds was noted, from September 1986 to August 1988. Sunrise time was taken from the local newspaper.

I noted that all birds rise before sunrise; however, during the breeding season some rise considerably earlier. There appears to be a regular sequence in which different species of birds rise, particularly during the general breeding period from April to July. At this time the Black Drongo *Dicrurus macrocercus* is the first to rise followed by House Crow *Corvus splendens*, Asian Koel *Eudynamys scolopacea*, and Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis*. The latest risers were Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*, Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala* and Purple Sunbird *Nectarinia asiatica*. During the winter the sequence was slightly different. On very cloudy or foggy days birds generally called later.

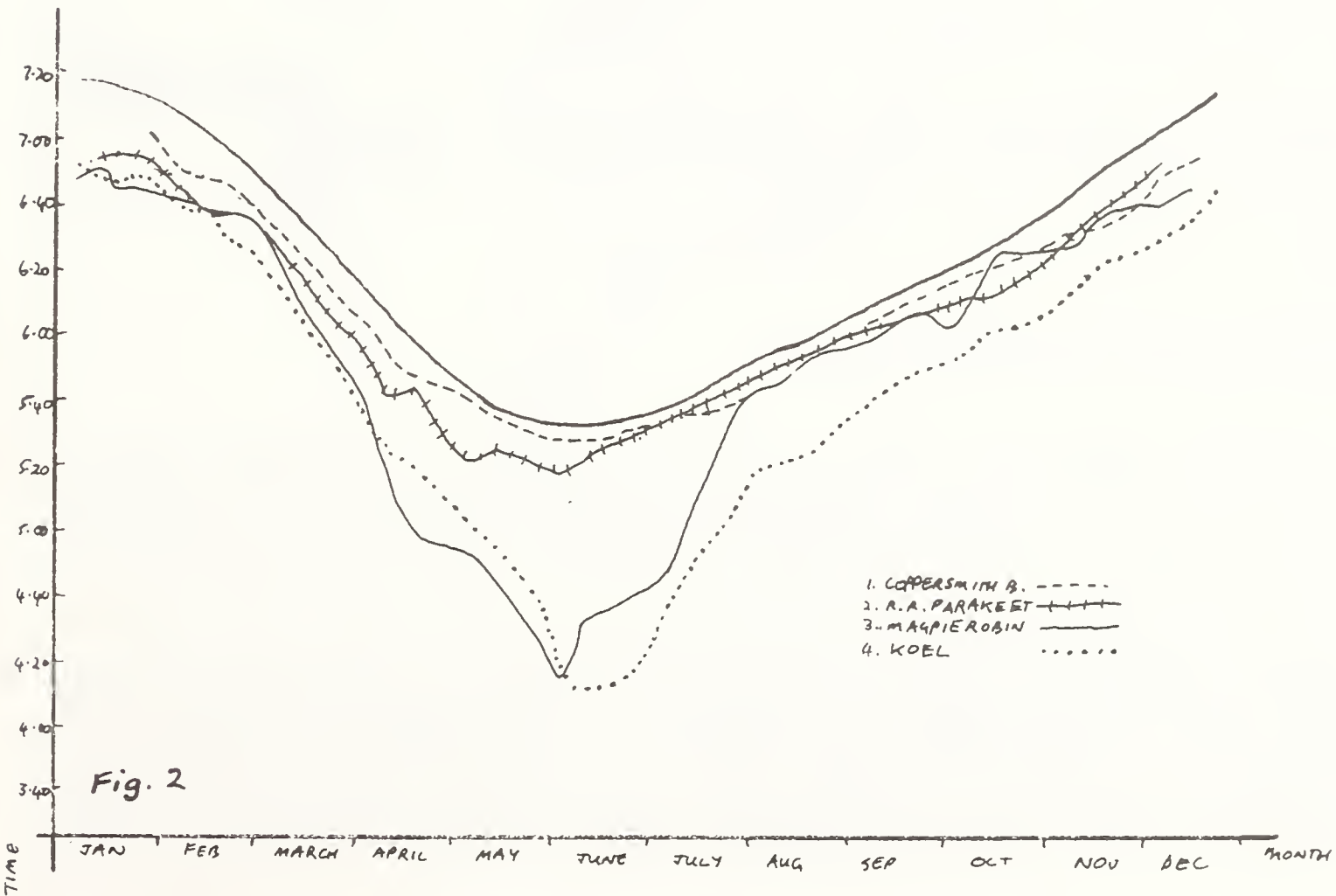
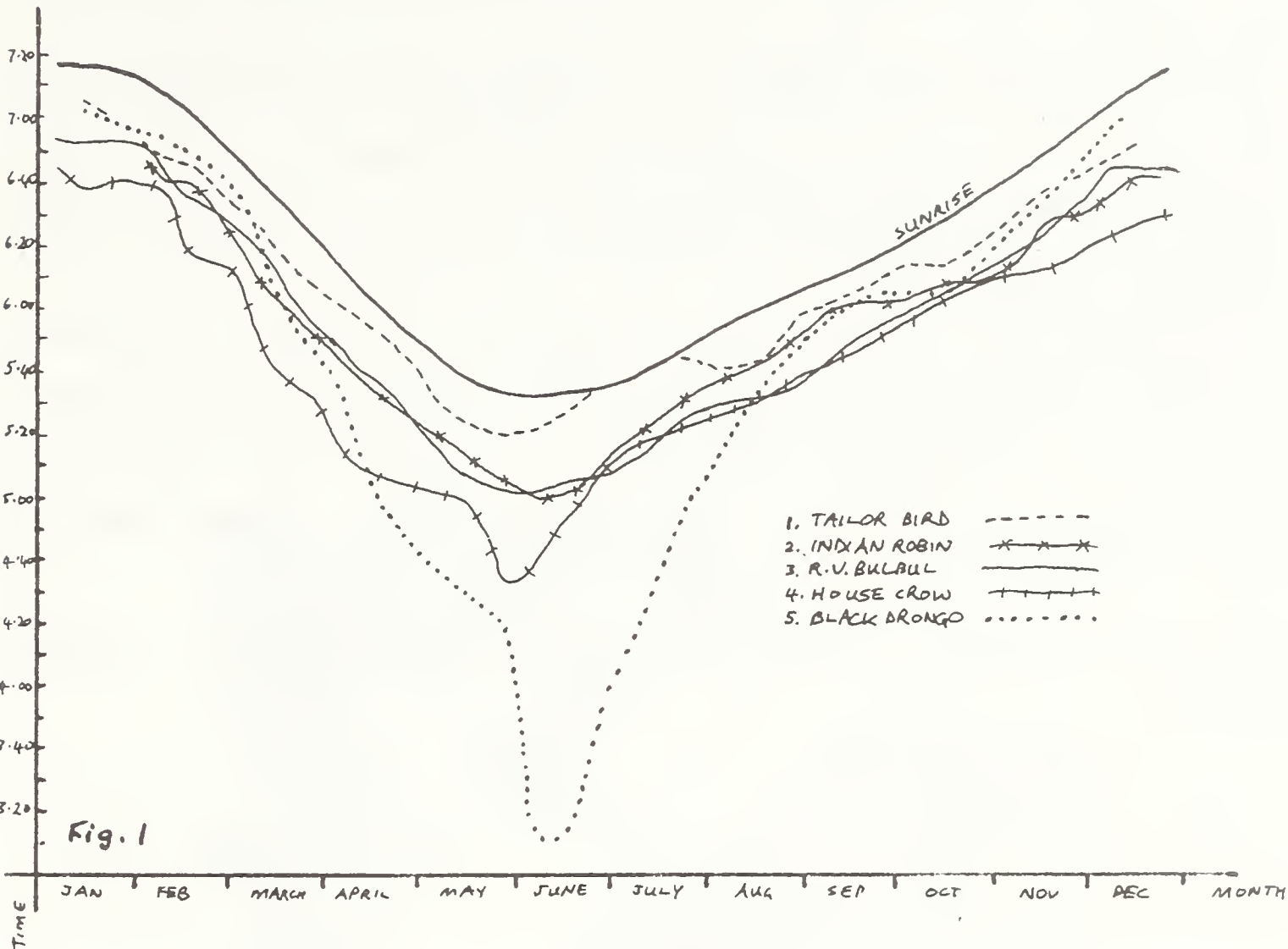
The largest variation in the rising time was seen in the case of Black Drongo. From mid-September to mid-March it used to rise ten to 15 minutes before the sunrise. From mid-May to mid-July it started rising 90 to 120 minutes earlier than the sunrise.

A large variation was seen in the rising time of the Koel. During November and December it was heard approximately 15 minutes before sunrise, from January to May this extended to about 25 minutes and from June to mid-July as early as 60 minutes. The early rising coincided with the breeding period.

The Magpie-Robin rises 15 to 20 minutes before sunrise in February to March and September to October. From November to January it rises approximately 30 minutes before sunrise and during April to June, the breeding season, it rises 50 minutes before sunrise.

The House Crow is a consistent early riser, 35 to 45 minutes before sunrise. Although they start calling and shifting positions in their roosting colonies much earlier, I took down their rising time only when I saw or heard them leaving.

Figs 1 & 2 Rising times of selected birds



The Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* also roosts in colonies and was found to be very punctual in leaving the roosting site in relation to sunrise time throughout the year. The Coppersmith Barbet is a steady late riser, getting up only five or ten minutes before sunrise.

In general the sequence and rising time of various species could be predicted to plus or minus two minutes. Even in the evening, a definite sequence was observed. Among the early roosters are the Purple Sunbird, Common Tailorbird *Orthotomus sutorius* and Coppersmith Barbet. These birds also happen to be late risers. Among the late roosters are Black Drongo, Red-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus cafer* and Magpie-Robin which, interestingly, are early risers.

Casual observations of rising times I have made in other areas seem, in general, to be very similar. However, in one place in close proximity to Jaipur city and its heavy traffic, sequence and timing were appreciably different. In two other locations at the base of forested hills the sequence of birds was more or less the same but there was a greater variation in times. It would be interesting to know more about the subject in relation to Indian birds.

R. G. Soni, Conservator of Forests, Stage 11, Sagar Road, Bikaner - 334001, Rajasthan.

Little-known Oriental Bird



BIDDULPH'S GROUND JAY

In 1929 and 1930 Frank Ludlow travelled extensively in Xinjiang province of China and found Biddulph's Ground Jay to be common. In this article Richard Grimmett describes his observations of the species in 1988 which suggest that its status has changed over the last 50 years.

Of the four ground jays or ground choughs *Podoces* spp. of Central Asia, two closely related species, namely Henderson's *P. hendersoni* and Biddulph's or White-tailed *P. biddulphi* occur in China¹. Biddulph's has the more restricted range of the two, being confined to the Tarim Basin of the autonomous region of Xinjiang (Sinkiang)¹. ICBP's

Biodiversity Project has plotted 24 records of the species (fig. 1) to give a distributional range which extends from the great salt lake 'Lop Nur' (40°30'N, 90°15'E) in the east to Tarim Azne (39°14'N, 76°45'E) in the west.

Both Chinese ground jays are striking species. Similar in size to a Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*, they are pinkish-fawn in colouration with blackish crowns and bold blackish and white wing patterns; the legs are long and strong and the bill is long, heavy and down-curved². In general appearance they are not unlike a very large Greater Hoopoe-Lark *Alaemon alaudipes*. Biddulph's differs from Henderson's in having a longer and proportionately thinner bill, and is slightly paler and more pinkish in colouration with blackish malar stripes and a predominantly white rather than blackish tail². Its flight is described as laboured and weak, but on the ground the species is able to 'run' with great speed³. Two calls have been described, a 'Chui-chui-chui' and a succession of low whistles in rapidly descending scale³.



Biddulph's or White-tailed *P. biddulphi* by Richard Grimmett.

Much of what is known about the species in the field stems from the work of Frank Ludlow who spent over eight months in the hot and dry Taklimakan Desert in 1929 and 1930³. Ludlow first came across the species, which he initially mistook for a Hoopoe *Upupa epops*, at Pishan (Guma) on the southern rim of the Taklimakan. Thereafter, he found the species to be 'very plentiful in the desert' between Tarim Azne and the Yarkant (Yarkand) River in November 1929; in the spring of 1930 it was seen at

'frequent intervals' along the Kashi (Kashgar)-Aksu road with 'great numbers' recorded in one area of sandy desert³. Ludlow reports that other observers found it abundant at Aksak Maral between Maralbashi and Shache (Yarkand) and at Lop, east of Hotan (Khotan)³. Given these reports, it is interesting that Cheng describes it as 'uncommon'¹.

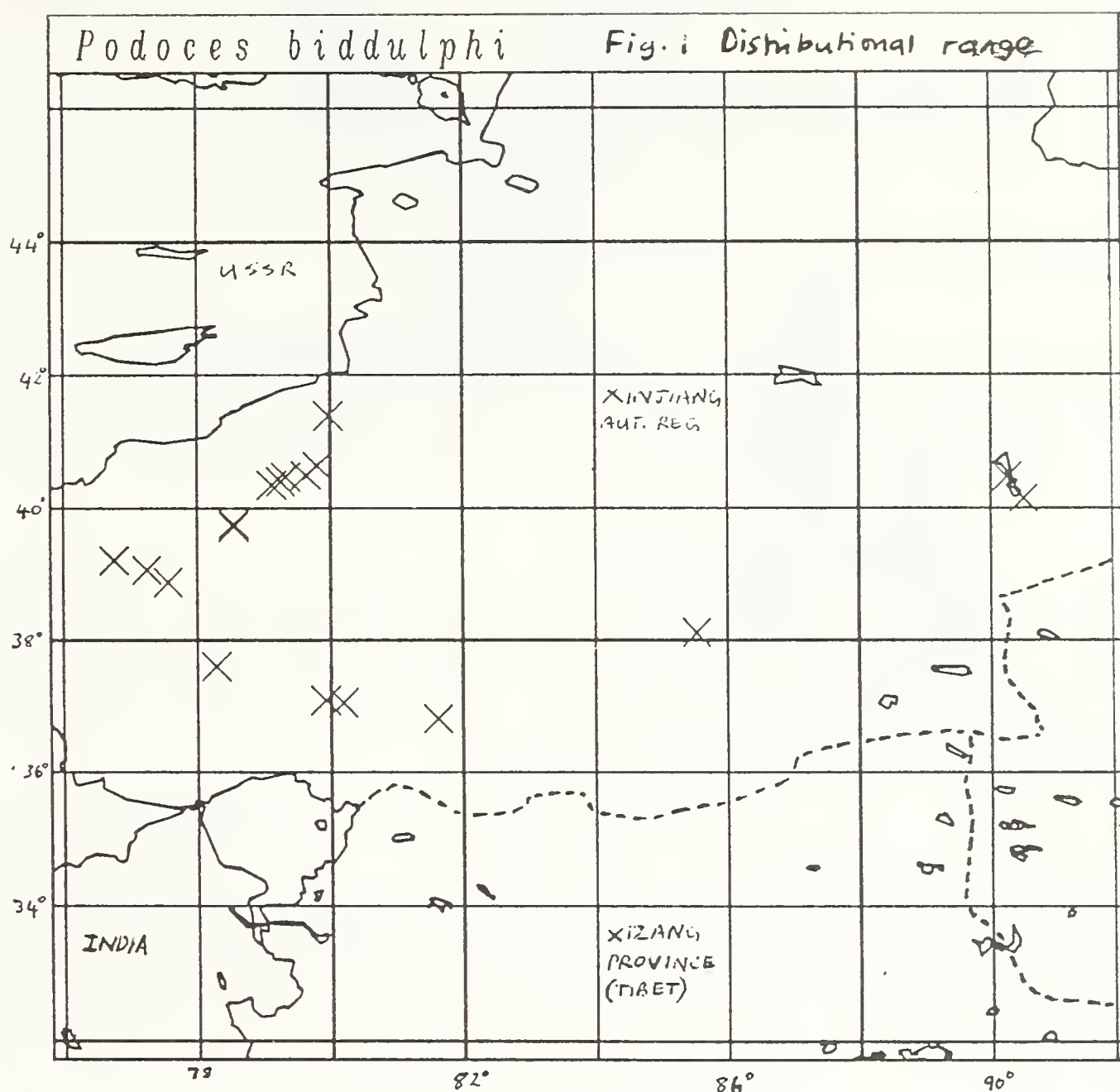
In his 1933 account Ludlow provides frequent snapshots of the species' habitat³. He found it in 'thick scrub jungle', 'salt-encrusted wastes' and 'sandy desert wastes' and amidst tamarisk *Tamarix*; when birds were disturbed they often flew into a desert poplar *Populus* tree or perched on the summit of a tamarisk cone³. Whilst Henderson's Ground Jay also occurs in the Tarim Basin, Goodwin² could find no record of both species occurring in the same habitat, with Ludlow noting that Biddulph's inhabited the central sandy zone and Henderson's the peripheral gravel zone between the sandy deserts and the mountainous rim of the Tarim Basin³.

Although the species is reported by local people to nest in holes in the ground, the nests collected by, or procured for, Ludlow were built in small trees (the nest Ludlow collected was placed on top of the cut end of a small desert poplar, about four feet from the ground; it was composed of a mixture of 'wool, hair, dead leaves, dry grass, and the soft cottony growth of reeds')³. Little is known about its food, although the crop of a bird shot by Ludlow contained bits of horse droppings, small beetles and maize seeds³.

In June 1988, I travelled through Xinjiang with Helen Taylor, and having read (with great anticipation) Ludlow's 1933 account of his remarkable journey, we had expected to find the species without much difficulty. We failed to observe the species in the desert on the edge of the Kashi Oasis, and on the journey from Kashi to Aksu and Aksu to Korla. Three days were spent in the desert surrounding Agal (40°45'N, 79°E) without any success. This was particularly surprising given that Ludlow saw the species frequently between Kashi and Aksu³.

Finally we tracked down what we assumed to be a family party (with at least six birds) in the desert between Korla and Puhui (about 5km from the edge of the Korla Oasis). There the habitat was quite different to that encountered elsewhere on the journey; it was sandy desert with numerous small hillocks and some quite high ridges. The desert was comparatively well vegetated with tamarisk, a variety of other desert shrubs and, most noticeably, small scattered poplars which the birds frequently used for perching. One bird was watched feeding; astride a promising spot it repeatedly lunged its bill deep into the sand, excavating down with forceful thrusts (and throwing up piles of sand with its powerful bill) to obtain what appeared to be a grub. The birds certainly moved swiftly on the ground, but rather than a 'run' as given by Goodwin², it was more a fast but corvid-like 'waddle' (indeed Ludlow reported that in the Hotan district it was often called 'Kil-yurgha', 'yurgha' being a quick amble). They were more willing to fly than I had expected, and although the flight was rather weak quite long distances were covered.

The current apparent scarcity of the species, combined with the fact that the desert is becoming increasingly, and perhaps seriously, degraded (with intensive grazing by goats and camels, considerable extraction of fuel wood especially desert poplar, and huge increases in irrigated land) does give cause for concern. Further work on the species' current status and distribution is therefore strongly recommended.



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Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Mike Crosby and Craig Robson of the International Council for Bird Preservation, for permission to use data compiled for ICBP's Biodiversity Project.

Note

Where possible, place names used in the text follow the spelling in the *Times Atlas of the World* (6th edition) with the names used by Ludlow in parentheses.

Richard Grimmett, 3 Madras Road, Cambridge, CB1 3PX, UK.



Birdwatching areas

KHAR, BALUCHISTAN, PAKISTAN

Khar is a visitor centre in the western state of Baluchistan, Pakistan. The author describes his short visit there in autumn 1990 which illustrates the tremendous potential of this site for migrating birds as well as some of the interesting resident wildlife.

In the western part of the Indus valley where the plains meet the edge of the Baluchistan hills lies Khar - a visitor centre in the Khirthar National Park. This desert reserve, 60 km to the north-west of Karachi, is an interesting watch-point for migration along the Indus Valley and is also a good place to see some of the less typical birds of the region as well as some interesting mammals.

The area around the visitor centre has a variety of habitats including desert plains, slopes running up to the plateaus of the surrounding hills, a small irrigated farm, and nearby, the Hab Dam and reservoir.

Driving from Karachi to the park you must cross the Hab Dam and at night time here the bright lights draw in insects which in turn attract Indian Nightjars *Caprimulgus asiaticus*. Sykes' Nightjar *C. mahrattensis* also occur here and future visitors should look out for them.

After the dam, the road becomes a sandy track running up to a group of rest houses on a small hillock, near the hills which rise sharply to the north. These are the responsibility of the Sind Wildlife Management Board, who also run the reserve and whose hospitality makes staying in the area a pleasure.

Running east to west, the last ranges of the Khirthar mountains are near to the rest houses. The enormous Hab reservoir is a short walk to the west, through some low sparse scrub where, in September at least, Long-billed Pipit *Anthus similis* can be found. To the east of the rest houses is a small farm with orchards which provide good habitat for passerines.

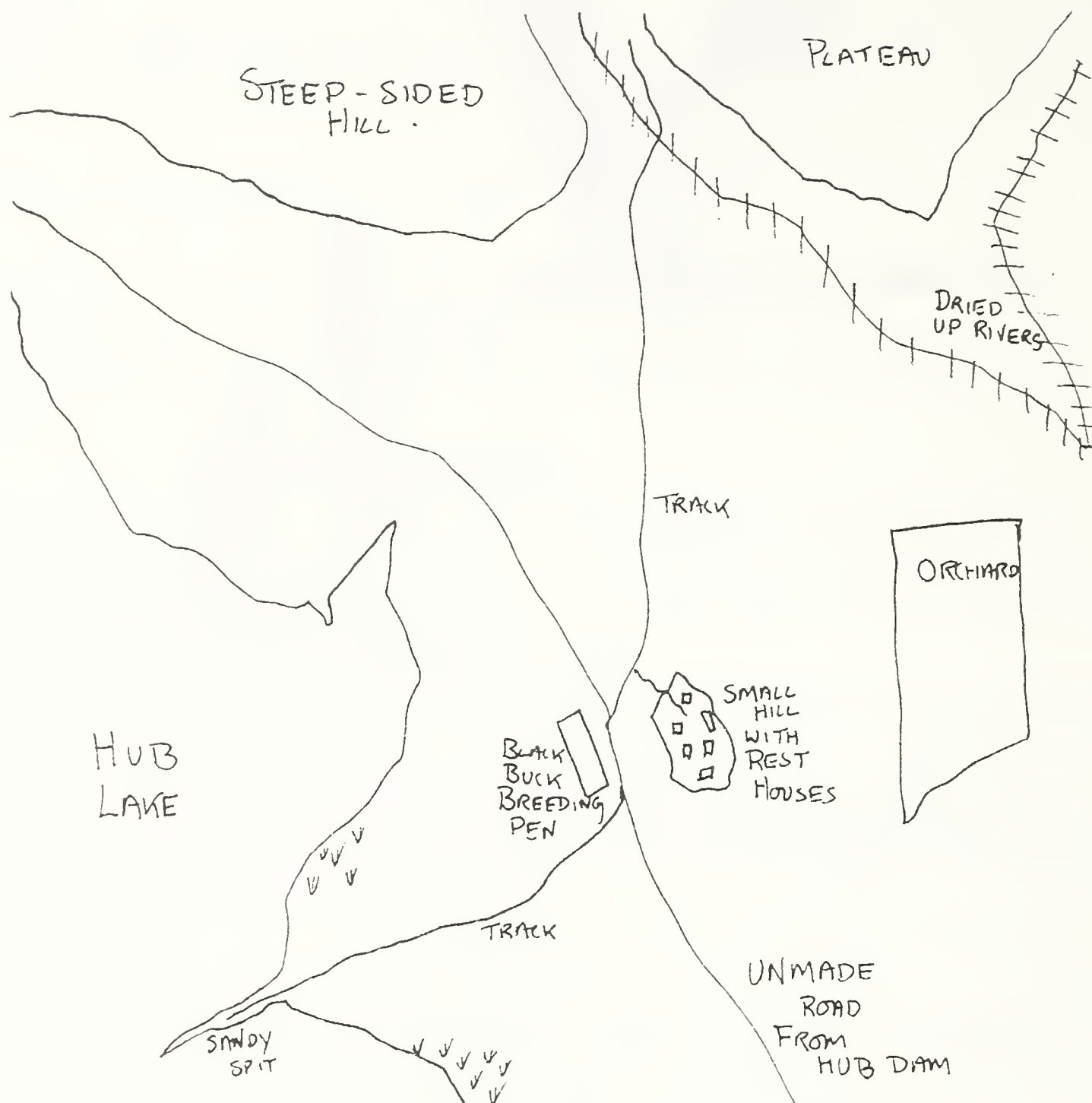
The range of mountains which runs south from Quetta provide a natural route for birds moving down to the Indian sub-continent. The lake is a convenient stop-over point and so at the right time of year the area abounds with migrants. The highlight of the migration season must be the large movement of both Demoiselle *Anthropoides virgo* and Common Cranes *Grus grus* through the area at the end of September and the beginning of October. In three days during that period I saw more than 3,000, and 25,000 have been recorded in one season. The cranes are accompanied by a smaller number of Eastern White Pelicans *Pelicanus onocrotalus* and occasionally by Greater Flamingos *Phoenicopterus roseus*, both of which stay in the area into the winter.



Demoiselle Cranes *Anthropoides virgo* by Mark Fenton.

Other migrants which can be seen on passage here include both Black *Dupetor flavicollis* and Little Bitterns *Ixobrychus minutus*; Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla*, which can be common; as well as a range of waders, gulls and terns. The area also acts as a magnet for passerine migrants, including Grey-necked Bunting *Emberiza buchanani*, which may breed in the area, Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*, Rosy Starling *Sturnus roseus*, Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*, Yellow-hooded (Citrine) *Motacilla citreola* and Yellow Wagtails *M. flava*, and Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas galactotes*. During my visit in early October I occasionally saw Marsh *Circus aeruginosus* and Pallid Harriers *C. macrourus*, and other raptors which have been recorded in the area include Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraeetus fasciatus*, Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*, Cinereous Vulture *Aegypius monachus* and Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*.

In winter, wildfowl inhabit the lake and a number of interesting passerines move into the area. The Hab reservoir is a major wintering location for Common Coot *Fulica atra*, with between 30,000 and 100,000 recorded. Smaller numbers of other species such as Red-necked *Podiceps grisegena*, Black-necked *P. nigricollis* and Little Grebes *Tachybaptus ruficollis*, Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*, Tufted Duck *A. fuligula* and Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* also occur.

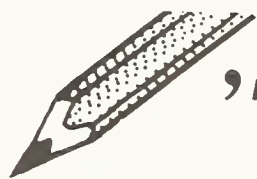


The area holds a small wintering population of Grey Hypocolius *Hypocolius ampelinus*, and Plain Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus neglectus* has been found. Although I failed to see one in early October, Sind Woodpecker *Picoides assimilis* has been seen in winter, presumably in the orchards of the farm, and may be resident.

Undoubtedly, one of the highlights of the area is Hume's Wheatear *Oenanthe alboniger* which is resident and seems to inhabit the slopes and the plateaus of the surrounding mountains. Other wheatears are also resident, including Rufous-tailed *O. xanthopyrna* and the *picata* morph of Variable *O. picata*. The slopes also provide a home for Urial *Ovis orientalis*, and further north one reaches the western edge of the range of the Wild Goat *Capra hircus*.

Like many sites in Pakistan, Khar is underwatched. These notes on my short visit will, I hope, suggest the potential rewards for visiting birdwatchers.

Nigel Lindsey, Flat 2, 6 Parker's Road, Broomhall, Sheffield, S10 1BN, UK.



'To the Editor'

Chinese Egret notes

In *Bulletin* 11 of May 1990 I read the contribution by Richard Lansdown on the Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes* which included a map of its wintering range. Richard mentioned the occurrence of small numbers of Chinese Egret in Sumatra. On the map he indicates the wintering range to cover the coast of Riau and part of North Sumatra province.

However, the only records of Chinese Egret from Sumatra are from 1983 on the coast of the Berbak Game Reserve, Jambi province¹, and 1989 from the proposed Sembiling Reserve in South Sumatra province². To my knowledge there are no records from the northern provinces.

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Dr. Marcel J. Silvius, National Co-ordinator, AWB-Indonesia, P. O. Box 254, Bogor, Indonesia.

English Names of Oriental Birds

A recently published book review by Anthony Gaston (*Ibis* 133: 211-212) has highlighted a dis-service being perpetrated on Oriental ornithology in the name of the OBC. The work in question, *The Birds of Bangladesh*, apparently follows a new list 'produced by the Oriental Bird Club', and many of the names, both English and Latin, were new to the reviewer. As far as I am aware, the OBC has never published a list of Oriental birds, though such a list was in preparation when I was a member of Council (and may well still be so).

Inevitably, a club which publishes an English-language journal and bulletin, with interests spanning the entire Oriental region, faces problems with English names. Indeed, it could be argued that the OBC has a responsibility to clear up the confusion and produce a definitive list of English names.

Opinions differ sharply on the best criteria for the compilation of such a list but in the meantime, the OBC, as a serious and responsible organisation, should not add to the confusion. Indeed, the guidelines for contributors to *Forktail* indicate that English and scientific names should follow King *et al.* (1975) *A field guide to the birds of South-East Asia*, or failing that, a recent standard work (e.g. *The birds of Wallacea*), while the *Bulletin* simply states that scientific names should follow King *et al.* where possible.

Despite these good intentions, the OBC's publications have repeatedly used English names which are new inventions, presumably of the editors. Also, it now appears that a list is being circulated privately (though in the name of the OBC) which purports to be a definitive list of both scientific and English names, despite the fact that it apparently contains numerous novelties.

The issue of English names has received much publicity in the last few years, with various attempts to rationalise and standardise names on a world-wide basis. The process seems inevitable, though I suspect that many birdwatchers would agree that much valuable time and energy is being wasted on what is (literally) a trivial issue. But, pending the publication of a definitive list by the OBC, and a public statement and discussion of the criteria to be used in its compilation, I would argue that the pages of the OBC's publications should not be used to foist new names on the readership 'through the back door', and that it was made clear to authors of regional checklists and the like that they are following the whims of two or three individuals, rather than an authoritative checklist published by the Club.

Simon Harrap, El Coqui, 3 Beresford Road, Holt, Norfolk, NR25 6EU, UK.

The book *Birds in Bangladesh* (not *The birds of Bangladesh* as incorrectly cited in *Ibis* 133: 211), actually refers to a list 'currently being produced' by the Oriental Bird Club, and there is no suggestion that this is definitive or finalised for publication. The list concerned was a draft list produced, partly for the purposes of consultation, both on the taxonomy and the regional distribution information. The author of the book was fully informed about the nature of the list, including the disadvantages of adopting an unpublished list. Contrary to Simon Harrap's comments, we can state categorically that no new English names have been invented by the OBC and that the guidelines for contributors have been adhered to as closely as possible. When a species that does not have an acceptable 'standardised' name is mentioned in our publications, the available names are carefully considered and the one deemed to be the most appropriate is adopted. Scientific names of species are included at least once in each published item, so readers unfamiliar with certain English names should be able to identify the birds concerned.

Simon Harrap may regard the whole issue as trivial but more attention paid to consistency in the use of English names for species would remove a frequent source of confusion from the literature. Many ornithological publications use more than one English name for a particular species, in some cases even within the same issue; the

more popular ones do not include scientific names and, in these, it is sometimes clear that even the editors are unaware that they have used two different names for certain species.

The International Ornithological Congress agreed in December 1990 to produce a standardised list of English names of birds of the world. It was decided to use C. G. Sibley and B. L. Monroe's (1990) *Distribution and taxonomy of birds of the world* as a basis for a list which will be discussed at the next meeting in four years time. Readers who have access to this book, and who would like to provide reasoned arguments for the use of English names other than those currently employed, should send their comments to the Oriental Bird Club.

(Eds.)

Andaman Update

OBC members may find the following information useful as an update of John Curson's article in *Bulletin* 10.

On a recent two week visit to South Andaman I found that, although most areas are still inaccessible to foreigners without a special permit from Delhi, the islands are slowly opening up to tourists. The best area of forest that I saw was at Mount Harriet National Park, fairly easily accessible with a frequent ferry from Port Blair to Bamboo Flats. On one visit here I saw five of the endemic species, Andaman Wood-Pigeon *Columba palumboides*, Andaman Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia rufipennis*, Andaman Coucal *Centropus andamanensis*, Andaman Drongo *Dicrurus andamanensis* and Andaman Treepie *Dendrocitta bayleyi*; the last two species at one stage in a flock that I estimated at approximately 40 birds in the ratio 2:1 of Treepies to drongos! At present you still need a permit to visit Mt. Harriet, but it's due to open to foreigners 'soon'. It is now also possible to visit and stay overnight at Havelock Island, a three and a half hour journey from Port Blair. I only spent one night here but found some fairly good forest between villages No. 6 and No. 7. A tidal creek here was the only place I saw just one Grey Teal *Anas gibberifrons*.

Krys Kazmierczak, c/o 9 Norwich Road, Northwood, Middx., HA6 1ND, UK.
Telephone: 09274 25612

The Hainan Nuthatch

In his review of *The Hong Kong Bird Report 1988* (*Bulletin* 11: 32) Tim Inskipp drew attention to a paper by Ben King and Liao Wei-ping on Hainan island in which 'the bird normally referred to as *Sitta frontalis chienfengensis* is considered to be referable to *S. solangiae*, the Yellow-billed Nuthatch, thus a new species for China'. The fact

that the nuthatch on Yunnan has 'normally' been referred to as a race of Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *S. frontalis* is, however, a consequence of inattention to its type description. This oversight was brought to light by Mees⁴ and I can do no better than quote his page 137:

'Greenway (1967: 142)³ placed *Sitta frontalis chienfengensis* with a query in the synonymy of the nominate race, but that cannot possibly be correct, as its describers expressly state that *chienfengensis* is a yellow-billed form, whereas the nominate race belongs to the red-billed group of subspecies. *S. f. chienfengensis* was in its original description compared with the forms *solangiae* and *fortior*, which the authors of *chienfengensis* regarded as subspecies of *S. frontalis* (cf. Cheng, Ting & Wang, 1964)¹, whereas Greenway listed *S. solangiae* as a separate species, with *fortior* as a subspecies. I have not examined material of *S. f. chienfengensis*, but on published evidence it looks as if its correct name should be *S. solangiae chienfengensis*'.

One final point needs to be made concerning the specific status and nomenclature of the Hainan nuthatch. The nuthatches which occur as montane isolates in Vietnam, on Hainan Island and in the Philippines (except Palawan), are distinguished from Velvet-fronted by a yellow bill and, in most cases, a distinct lilac tone to the plumage. There seems little doubt that the Vietnamese forms *solangiae* and *fortior* should be treated as specifically distinct from Velvet-fronted. The various yellow-billed Philippine forms have usually been treated as races of Velvet-fronted, though there is an increasing tendency to treat these too as a distinct species, *S. oenochlamys*. But there is, on the basis of present knowledge, no really good reason to suppose that the yellow-billed forms in Vietnam/Hainan and on the Philippines are separate species (the breeding biology and vocalisations of all are apparently unknown or unstudied, for example). The obvious link between these nuthatches has already been pointed out (e.g. by Delacour²) and, as with any group of closely similar allopatric forms, even after extensive study, the decision whether to 'split' or 'lump' will always be somewhat arbitrary and subjective. If they were to be lumped however, they would have to be known as *Sitta oenochlamys* (the oldest available name), and the Hainan nuthatch would thus become *S. oenochlamys chienfengensis*.

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Simon Harrap. El Coqui, 3 Beresford Road, Holt, Norfolk, NR25 6EW, UK.



Reviews....Reviews.....

Howes, J. and Bakewell, D. 1989. **Shorebird Studies Manual** AWB Publication No. 55. Kuala Lumpur

The Asian Wetland Bureau (AWB) can be justifiably proud of this publication. It is a thoroughly enjoyable book, full of interesting data and facts presented in an attractive manner. There are many drawings, diagrams and tables to illustrate the text. However, the good selection of black and white photographs of bird species and habitats are sadly flat in their reproduction. Photographs include Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynohynchus pygmeus* in the hand, and Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus* and Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* in the field. The topics covered in the book include shorebird conservation issues in Asia; a guide to shorebird families; plumage and moult; identification and note-taking (with some fine line drawings by Craig Robson); and for the field ecologist, methods of field surveying, censusing and studies on feeding ecology. There is a strong bias towards Asia in the book, but much of the information will be applicable elsewhere.

I noticed few errors and the production is of a relatively high standard. I urge all birdwatchers concerned with the conservation of shorebirds to read this publication and if possible, to support the AWB in its sterling work in the Orient.

Graeme Green

Holmes, D. and Nash, S 1989. **The Birds of Java and Bali**. xii + 109 pp. 25 colour plates. Singapore: Oxford University Press. £6.95.

This slim volume in the 'Images of Asia' series is an introduction to the most typical, representative and colourful birds of Java and Bali. It is not intended to be a field guide and is aimed at the 'non-specialist reader'. 112 species are illustrated in colour and the text refers to some 232 species (almost half of the total number of species on the Java and Bali list). However, unlike many such introductory books, the text is authoritative and useful. Important identification features are given, together with other relevant information to help the amateur birdwatcher. Usefully, the names of many of the birds are also given in Indonesian.

The colour plates are bold and striking, although not of a very high artistic standard. Nevertheless they should enable most of the birds depicted to be identified in the field. Whilst the majority of the species illustrated can be seen fairly easily (by the more dedicated birdwatcher at least), the bird in the frontispiece cannot; the Javanese Wattled

Lapwing *Vanellus macropterus* is almost certainly extinct and its sad demise is used to emphasise the desperate need for conservation awareness and habitat protection in Indonesia. The author also highlights the hunting pressure in the country, both for food and for the cage-bird trade.

The book concludes with an annotated checklist tabulating 433 of the birds of Java and Bali. Although vagrants are excluded, almost every species likely to be seen on the islands is listed. This book will appeal to many casual birdwatchers and visitors to Indonesia, but its main aim is surely to introduce Indonesians themselves to their own spectacular avifauna. The Indonesian language edition which is in preparation will certainly help to do this.

Nigel Redman

Mason, V. and Jarvis, F. 1989. **Birds of Bali**. Pp 80: 58 colour illustrations and 5 colour photographs. Singapore: Periplus Editions. Price unknown.

This charming little book describes and illustrates 122 of the birds most likely to be encountered on Bali. The text is chatty and informative, and the splendid watercolours (by the same artist who illustrated *Birds of Singapore* by C. Hails) are both artistic and evocative. The illustrations are not intended to show accurate feather detail but should easily enable the visitor to identify the majority of the birds. I actually preferred these illustrations to those in *Birds of Singapore*.

Birds of Bali is not a true field guide, but it does provide an excellent introduction to the avifauna of the island. The preface includes some information on where to watch birds on Bali, and the book concludes with a comprehensive, coded checklist of every species recorded on the island. The book's primary aim is, presumably, to stimulate an interest in Bali's birds amongst the many visitors to the island, but I hope it will also encourage the Balinese people to appreciate their wonderful birds.

Nigel Redman

Gibbs, D. 1990. **Wallacea**. Pp. 94 + viii; many maps. Privately published. £11.00.

This rather superior pocket-sized trip report has been typeset and bound in a card cover. The report covers an extended visit made by the author, often on his own, to this little-known part of Indonesia. During February - April 1989 and December 1989 - February 1990, the author travelled extensively through Sulawesi, the Moluccas and the Lesser Sundas. For each site or island visited he gives some useful background information

concerning logistics and birding hints, followed by a coded species list of the birds he recorded during his visit. Site maps are liberally sprinkled throughout.

There are a few pages of general tips as an introduction, and an appendix gives some useful field identification and taxonomic notes. A seven-page update is included at the end as a result of the author's return to Wallacea in August - September 1990.

This excellent report is essential for anyone contemplating a visit to this fascinating region and is a good example of how a trip report should be written.

Nigel Redman

The report is available from David Gibbs, Cedarwood, Forest Road, Warfield, Bracknell, Berks., RG12 6DG, UK (Ed.)

Dekker, R. W. R. J. 1990. Conservation and biology of megapodes (Megapodiidae, Galliformes, Aves). Amsterdam: Universitat van Amsterdam. 132 pages.

Written by the world's expert on megapodes, this book comprises a collection of recently published papers from various sources and a previously unpublished paper on megapode incubation strategies. Other chapters cover the conservation and management of megapodes, predation and western limits of megapode distribution and uses of the eggs of the Maleo *Macrocephalon maleo*. There are three chapters dealing with megapode breeding, including two on the Maleo.

The book, drawing together papers on many aspects of the birds' biology and conservation, will be useful to all those with an interest in megapodes. The text is in both Dutch and English. There are two good colour photographs of the Maleo on the jacket. The book is only available from Dr. R. Dekker, Department of Ornithology, National Museum of Natural History, P.O. Box 9517, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands. Cost £8, including postage and packing.

Carol Inskipp.

Picken, V. B. (ed.) 1990. The Hong Kong Bird Report 1989. Pp.160. 18 colour and 10 black-and-white photographs. Hong Kong Bird Watching Society.

This latest report from the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society must rank as one of the best to date. It is a thick edition, containing several very interesting papers, in particular 'A review of the status and distribution of the Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*' by Peter Kennerley. This summarises recent occurrences of the species in nine

countries, including Hong Kong, and there are short sections on behaviour, the wintering grounds, breeding status, threats and conservation. There is a very useful paper on the identification of Pechora Pipit *Anthus gustavi* by Geoff Carey and a note on the identification of adult Slaty-backed Gulls *Larus schistisagus* by David Melville.

A section on birds new to Hong Kong includes records of four new species; Relict Gull *Larus relictus*, Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*, Yellow-bellied Bush-Warbler *Cettia acanthizoides* and Two-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*, and one new subspecies Inornate Warbler *P. inornatus humei*. All are illustrated by good and informative colour photographs. Other articles include a comparison of migrants at Beidaihe, north-east China with those of Hong Kong, and two papers on seabirds which refer to the Strait of Taiwan and the sea between the Philippines and Hong Kong which both record sightings of Long-tailed Jaegers (Skuas) *Stercorarius longicaudus*, a species only once before noted in China.

The report is available from The Hong Kong Birdwatching Society, GPO Box No. 12460, GPO Hong Kong, priced HK\$75 or US\$ 11 including postage.

Craig Robson and Tim Inskipp

Rahmani, A. R., Narayan, G., Sankaran, R., Rosalind, L., Bhushan, B. and U. Ganguli Lachungpa 1990. **Status and ecology of the Lesser and Bengal Floricans with reports on Jerdon's Courser and Mountain Quail.** Final Report. Bombay: Bombay Natural History Society. Pp. 155.

This highly comprehensive report describes the Bombay Natural History Society project which ran between 1984 and 1989 to study the ecology and current status of the Bengal Florican *Houbaropsis bengalensis*, Lesser Florican *Sypheotides indica*, Jerdon's Courser *Rhinoptilus bitorquatus* and Himalayan (Mountain) Quail *Ophrysia superciliosa*. The report is well illustrated with both colour and black and white photographs of the species and their habitats, excellent line drawings by Carl d'Silva showing florican behaviour, and many detailed maps.

Detailed accounts are given of the general ecology, behaviour and current status of the two floricans in India, and recommendations are made for their conservation. The report draws attention to the fact that the Bengal Florican is perhaps the rarest of the Otididae with an estimated population of only 250 to 300 individuals in India. While the species has lost most of its habitat to the spread of cultivation, human habitations, pressures from grazing livestock and bad grassland management, its remnant habitats in India are not unduly threatened. The Lesser Florican population is estimated to be 1000 birds; more than three times higher than that of the Bengal Florican in India. However, the report points out that it is, nevertheless, the most endangered bustard in the country. This is mainly because the Lesser Florican's breeding habitat is severely threatened by land use changes.

The rediscovery in 1986 of Jerdon's Courser and the subsequent survey of the species and its habitat are described, and recommendations for future work are made. Studies on the bird have been seriously hampered by its nocturnal behaviour.

A brief search was made for the supposedly-extinct Mountain Quail. The report concludes that as most of the known habitat of the species has been altered and no reports from local people could be traced, it is doubtful that the species now survives.

The report is mainly intended for the managers of sanctuaries and only a limited number of copies have been printed. Copies are only available to those who are really interested in floricans, and who are connected or going to be connected with their conservation. Write to the Bombay Natural History Society, Hornbill House, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Road, Bombay 400 023, India. Cost (outside India) is £8.

Carol Inskipp

Harvey, W.G. 1990. **Birds in Bangladesh.** Pp. 188 pp. 3 maps
Dhaka: University Press. £13.50.

Prior to this work the only comprehensive review of the status and distribution of birds in Bangladesh was Haroun-er Rashid's 1965 checklist, although a number of checklists have also been produced in Bangladesh. This checklist is therefore an important advance: it gives the current status of all species reported in Bangladesh by region and month, with breeding and migration periods where known, and includes many unpublished records.

The checklist concentrates on recent records (in the 1980s). While a listing of the substantial number of unpublished reports was essential and current status is important to conservation (particularly of scarcer species), this focus may have led to some old records, such as museum specimens, being omitted. Some species' names (scientific and English) are unfamiliar as the checklist follows an unpublished draft of a list of Oriental species. In general there are few typographical errors despite the tight deadline for its production.

Perhaps this book was not the place, but a more detailed directory of important bird sites in Bangladesh would have been valuable to encourage more fieldwork and to document the threats to Bangladesh's diverse but fragmented wildlife habitats. For example, many of the records have come from a limited number of sites and many other sites are under-recorded or unstudied. The book contains little discussion of the bird communities of different habitats, although these may be inferred from the species accounts.

These are minor points and this work clearly shows the great ornithological interest of this country. With over 600 species, and more being added each year, still little understood populations and movements of migrants, and a number of species of the hill areas at their lowest altitudes, there is much scope for further work. Recent discoveries, such as a wintering population of Spoon-billed Sandpipers *Eurynorhynchus*

pygmeus, highlight this, and over 100 of the species noted in this checklist have not been recorded in recent years. It is to be hoped that this book encourages more fieldwork, both from Bangladeshis and visitors, so that future editions can fill in the gaps in our ornithological knowledge of this important but neglected corner of the Oriental region.

Paul Thompson, c/o Technoconsult Ltd., Sena Kalyan Bhaban, GPO box 2608, DHAKA, Bangladesh.

Wu Zhikang *et al.* 1986. **Birds of Guizhou**. Pp. 486, eight colour plates. Guizhou People's Publishing House. £15, available from China Art Cultural Centre, 32 Parker St., London WC2B 5PH. (In Chinese).

This is a very welcome study of the birds of Guizhou province in south-west China, an ornithologically little known region which Wu Zhikang and colleagues explored between 1974 and 1982, covering a distance of over 16,000 km and taking over 8,600 specimens. The book opens with an overview of the topography, climatic zones and vegetation of the region, and goes on to list 417 species, of which no fewer than 102 species and 21 subspecies have not been recorded previously in Guizhou. Among rarities listed are Bar-backed Partridge *Arborophila brunneopectus*, Long-tailed Broadbill *Psarisomus dalhousiae* and Slaty-bellied Tesia *Tesia olivea*. The taxonomy of almost half the species listed is discussed in some detail. The line drawings are not of sufficiently high quality to be of much use, and although localities are given for where specimens were collected, it is unfortunate that there are no detailed maps. Nevertheless, the authors are to be congratulated on producing a pioneering work which will be of value for many years to come. The text is in Chinese, but scientific names are given.

Tan Yao-kuang, Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, Peking (translated by Michael Rank)

Yao-Kuang Tan, Chieko Katsura and Hiroyoshi Higuchi (eds.). 1990. **Bibliography of Chinese ornithology**. Pp. 633. Tokyo: Wild Bird Society of Japan. Y4,200 (=c.£16.80 currently).

This work covers 2,464 articles and 96 books written in Chinese between 1924 and 1989, and published in Chinese publications or by publishing companies in mainland China. The titles are translated into English and Japanese and those that contain specific bird names are listed in taxonomic order. A further 1090 titles which do not name particular birds are listed in chronological order. All items are further classified by

subject (49 subjects, including distribution, ecology, conservation and education), by journal (179 different journals), by locality (42 Chinese provinces and main places; 330 minor place-names) and by author.

The bibliography is a very useful summary of the Chinese literature, which now averages over 200 items per year and is largely inaccessible to foreign ornithologists. Unfortunately, many of the publications it lists do not have an English summary and quite a few probably are not available outside of China. Perhaps the publication of this book will stimulate wider international dissemination of Chinese publications, and inclusion of more English summaries in the Chinese journals.

Now that the Chinese have completed this comprehensive and meticulous work perhaps someone will compile a similar bibliography of the literature relating to Chinese ornithology in languages other than Chinese. Cheng (1987, *A synopsis of the avifauna of China*) lists most of the important distributional works published since 1930, but tracing older publications and those dealing with other subjects, can be very time-consuming.

Tim Inskipp

Announcements & Requests

Help requested for Megapode Handbook

For the forthcoming *Megapode Handbook* (to be published by Oxford University Press) sound-recordings and field-notes are required of all megapode species. The authors, René Dekker and Darryl Jones, are especially interested in all sorts of data (such as island distribution, breeding strategy, breeding season and behaviour) on scrubfowl *Megapodius* species on islands in the Philippines, Indonesia, around New Guinea, Solomons and Vanuatu (New Hebrides). Good-quality photographs showing the colouration of bare parts are needed for the preparation of colour plates.

Please send your information to René Dekker, Instituut voor Taxonomische Zoologie, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Postbus 4766, 1009 AT Amsterdam Netherlands; or Darryl Jones AES, Griffith University, Nathan, Queensland 4111, Australia. All contributors will be acknowledged and materials will be returned.

Andaman and Nicobar Island Bird Records Wanted

INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) Andaman and Nicobar Chapter is a non-governmental organisation trying to promote conservation and an interest in the wildlife of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. So far they have published a series of 'Awareness' booklets and posters on such subjects as the unique island corals and the Dugong or (Sea-Cow) *Dugong dugon*. There are apparently few, if any, residents of the islands with more than a passing interest in birds, so INTACH is trying to gather some information and illustrations, particularly of the endemic species, with a view to producing some educational materials and a small data-base on the local avifauna. Birdwatchers who have visited the islands are requested to send bird lists, copies of photos, slides, drawings, etc. to: Mr Samir Acharya, INTACH, c/o Tarangs, Middle Point, Port Blair 744101, South Andaman Island, INDIA or Krys Kazmierczak, c/o 9 Norwich Road, Northwood, Middx., HA6 1ND, UK. Club members are welcome to contact Krys Kazmierczak if planning a trip to the Andamans, or Mr. Acharya while in Port Blair.

Stay at Mai Po!

OBC members will be interested to know of the new facilities now opened at Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve in Hong Kong.

It is a popular place for birdwatchers as it holds a significant proportion of the wintering population of Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi* and Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*. During the spring and autumn passage, thousands of waders use Mai Po as a stop-over place and some endangered species such as Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*, Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus* and Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* are not difficult to find.

The reserve is within a comfortable 90 minutes drive from the town. Since the mid-1980s, the World Wide Fund for Nature (Hong Kong) has been working on the conservation of the marsh and facilities have been established for birdwatchers. Since the opening of the Peter Scott Field Studies Centre last year, birdwatchers can now stay overnight at Mai Po. Compared with alternative accommodation in hotels in Hong Kong, this is very cheap and ideal for budget-conscious birdwatchers. Prices per person are HK\$100 in a 3-bed room, HK\$ 150 in a 2-bed room and HK\$ 250 in a single room. There are only rooms for 11 people and so an early reservation is recommended. The cost of the first night is required as a deposit with advance bookings. Meals should also be ordered in advance. Booking should be made through The Peter Scott Studies Centre, Mai Po, N. T., Hong Kong.

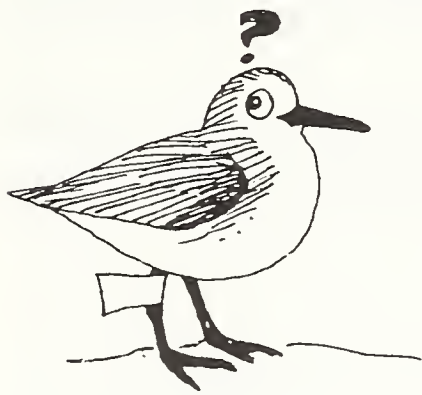
As all the facilities at Mai Po belong to WWF-HK, all visiting birdwatchers are urged to join them. Membership costs HK\$ 120 per year.

Permits for the reserve must also be obtained in advance from the Agriculture and Fisheries Department of Hong Kong. A written application should be sent at least three weeks before visiting to The Director, Agriculture and Fisheries Department, Canton Road Government Offices, 393 Canton Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Applicants should give their name, address, passport number, reason and date of visit. It is useful to mention your membership of relevant organisations such as WWF-HK, OBC or others.

Flag Watch 1991 - Keep your Eyes Open

Australian wader banding groups have begun placing coloured leg flags on a variety of species caught in south-eastern Australia and Java, Indonesia. This activity is part of a cooperative east Asia - Australasia flyway project, which has the objective of increasing knowledge of wader migration routes.

By mid-February 1991, over 3200 birds had been flagged and it was hoped that a further thousand birds could be marked before the birds departed on northward migration in late March/early April. Numbers of birds flagged to February 1991 were as follows:



Rufous-necked Stint <i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	1443
Curlew Sandpiper <i>C. ferruginea</i>	933
Oriental Pratincole <i>Glareola maldivarum</i>	602
Ruddy Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	99
Red Knot <i>C. canutus</i>	60
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	40
Pacific Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis (dominica) fulva</i>	25
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper <i>C. acuminata</i>	11

Other target species are Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*, Grey Plover *P. squatarola*, Sanderling *C. alba*, Great Knot *C. tenuirostris* and Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*.

The flags are durable and should be visible as long as the marked bird remains alive. Therefore, a check should be made of any waders of the above species seen in the flyway for the next few years. They are either orange or dark green plastic bands with a flap, at right angles to the band, which has a length of about twice the band diameter. Most flags have been placed on the upper right leg (tibia), but a few are on the lower right leg (tarsus) and on the left leg. The exact position is not important.

We would be grateful if birdwatchers would look out for leg-flagged birds, particularly during the migration periods in April/May and July/September and also in the breeding season. Reports of sightings should include species name, place (including latitude and longitude), date and also approximate numbers and species of waders present.

Information should be sent to: Australian Bird Banding Scheme, GPO Box 8, Canberra ACT 2601, AUSTRALIA, Telephone: (61) - 06 2500321, Fax (61) - 06 2500399.

Mark Barter, Australasian Wader Studies Group

Wallacea Report Available

Wallacea: A site guide for birders, covers all major sites in Sulawesi, Moluccas and the Lesser Sundas. 101 pages, 25 maps with notes on identification and taxonomy and a 90 minute tape which includes some scarce and difficult species. £11 from David Gibbs, Cedarwood, Forest Road, Warfield, Bracknell, Berks., RG12 6DG, UK (stock limited).

Request for information on Bat Hawk

Detailed information on the biology and behaviour of the African subspecies of Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus* has been collected. Similar information is required covering subspecies from Malaysia, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea, to complete a study being carried out by Transvaal Museum, South Africa.

Any information covering all aspects of this species' biology and behavior, including tape recordings of calls and references, are needed. Details answering the following questions would be especially welcomed. Where do they roost and nest and in which species of trees? What is their diet? Are pellets available? Is all prey consumed in flight? What visual and vocal displays do they have and what is the role of the sexes during incubation?

Any information received will be appreciated and acknowledged. Please write to Tony Harris, Department of Birds, Transvaal Museum, P.O. Box 413, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa.

Calling Indian Bird-call Enthusiasts

Indian birdwatcher with 12 years of bird recording experience would like to correspond and exchange notes with anyone interested in the calls and songs of Indian birds. Write to: P.S. Sivaprasad, 51 Ansari Street, Ramnagar, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu 643001, South India.

Help at Hand for Birdwatchers in Sri Lanka

Ceylinco Travels offers birdwatchers tailor-made tour programmes in Sri Lanka. This Sri Lankan travel company, has a special interest department led by Mr Aloy D. C. Diaz who is a committee member of the field ornithology group of Sri Lanka and has led a number of birdwatching tours in Sri Lanka, including groups from the Birdwatching Club of Australia and the National Adventure Society (USA).

Sri Lanka has almost 300 species of birds, out of which about 20 are endemic and 200 are resident, the remainder being migrant winter visitors. Among the endemic species are the Ceylon Magpie *Urocissa caerulea*, Ceylon Junglefowl *Gallus lafayetii* and Ceylon White-eye *Zosterops ceylonensis*.

Birdwatching is good all year round in Sri Lanka but it is best to avoid the months of September and October because of the rains during those months. A good birdwatching trip requires 10 to 20 days, but, for those who are pressed for time, we can ensure visitors see over 100 species on just a three day tour.

Ceylinco Travels can make all travel arrangements, including car/coach hire, or four wheel jeep hire for the Yale National Park, Bundala Bird Sanctuary and Hortain Plains. Knowledgeable ornithology guides can be provided to lead parties.

Aloy Diaz of Ceylinco Travels can be contacted at Ceylinco House, 69 Janadhipathi Mawatha, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka. Tel. 437791/438833. Telex 21265 Celinco CE. Fax (941) 449980.



Recent Reports

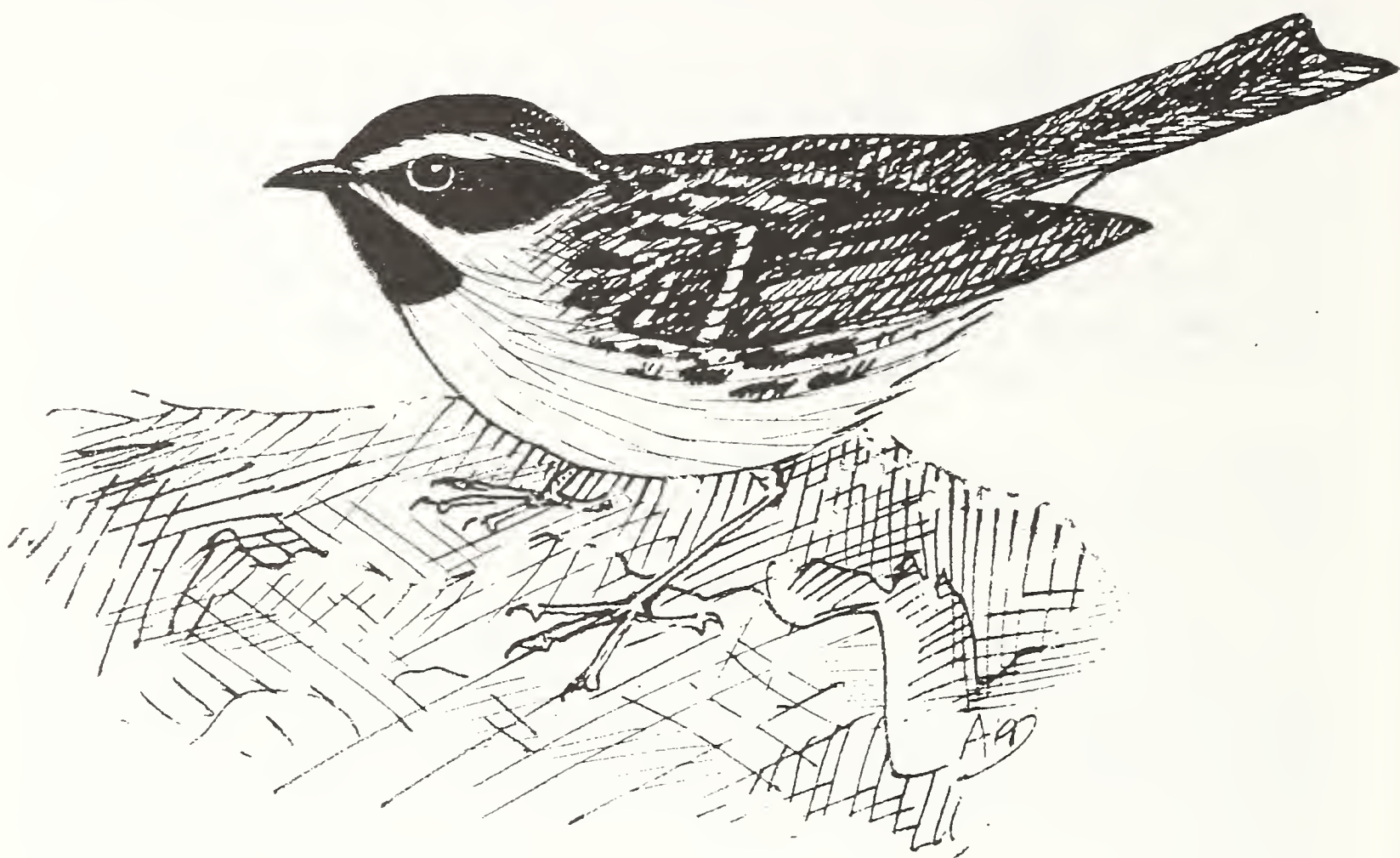
These are largely unconfirmed records covering the period from July 1990 to February 1991. We urge that if they have not already done so, contributors provide full details to the relevant regional organisations in due course.

CHINA

Once again information was received from the annual autumn counts at Beidaihe, Hebei. A Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua) *Stercorarius parasiticus* in September (JC); was the first record for China. Other unusual records were three Nordmann's Greenshanks *Tringa guttifer* in September (JC); at least eight Great Black-headed Gulls *Larus ichthyaetus* (JC); a Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* in September (JC); several Stock Pigeons *Columba oenas* (JC), well to the east of their previously recorded range in China; an Eurasian Nuthatch *Sitta europaea* (JC *et al.*) and a Chinese Bush-Warbler *Bradypterus taczanowskii* (JC). During 22 October to 16 November, 848 Oriental Storks *Ciconia boyciana* were counted (MW *et al.*). Crane totals during the same period (MW *et al.*) were as follows: Common Crane *Grus grus* 4199, Hooded Crane *G. monacha* 452, Red-crowned Crane *G. japonensis*, White-naped Crane *G. vipio* 63, Siberian Crane *G. leucogeranus* 577 and 525 not specifically identified.

Also of note during this period (MW *et al.*) were 350 Upland Buzzards *Buteo hemilasius* and 154 Great Bustards *Otis tarda*. 14-15 Relict Gulls *Larus relictus* were recorded during the autumn (JC, MW *et al.*). At the Luanhe estuary, south of Beidaihe, on 28 October (MW *et al.*) were 500 Ruddy Shelducks *Tadorna ferruginea*, three Hooded and six Red-crowned Cranes and a single Relict Gull. Further south at the Daqinghe estuary on 13 November (MW *et al.*) were 25 Oriental Storks, 24 Red-crowned Cranes and 12 Relict Gulls.

More interesting reports from Golmud, Qinghai were submitted by JHo. Two remarkable records were an European Robin *Erithacus rubecula* on 8-9 November; a new record for China, and a Parasitic Jaeger on 3 October, the second Chinese record (see Beidaihe). An immature Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* on 16 and 19 November and a Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* in January/February, were new Qinghai records; the former well to the west of its regular range in China. Two Stock Pigeons on 7 and 9 October and another on 16 November, were also new for the province. Up to seven Eurasian Siskins *Carduelis spinus* on four days between 8-19 November, were also the first for Qinghai and possibly western China. At least 25 Black-throated Accentors *Prunella atrogularis* were recorded between 24 October and 14 November, with a maximum count of 14 on 26th. These records are the first for Qinghai. Also new for Qinghai were Hume's Whitethroat *Sylvia (curruca) althaea*, a single in January/February; a flock of 14 Tibetan Serins *Serinus thibetanus* observed on 24-25 October; and up to eight House Sparrows *Passer domesticus* noted on four



Black-throated Accentor *Prunella atrogularis* by Adam Davison

days between 25 October and 5 December. Single Goldcrests *Regulus regulus* on 26 October, 2 November and 7 December were thought to be of the sub-species *coatsi* (*tristis*), previously recorded in China as a winter visitor to Xinjiang province. A first winter Mew Gull *Larus canus* from 9-15 November was perhaps the third record for the province, with previous records from Qinghai Hu. An unusual concentration of up to 130 Gldenstdt's Redstarts *Phoenicurus erythrogaster* was noted from 24 October. Also of interest were: two flocks of Pallas's Sandgrouse *Syrrhaptes paradoxus* flying east on 5 November (11) and 16 November (eight); at least 3-4 different Lesser Whitethroats *Sylvia curruca* between 24 October and 13 November; up to six Eurasian Chiffchaffs *Phylloscopus collybita* during the same period; a single Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* on 10 November, the first for western Qinghai; and a Lapland Longspur *Calcarius lapponicus* in January/February.

At Laoye Shan, north of Xining, Qinghai on 27 November (JHo), two more firsts for the province were discovered; three Japanese Waxwings *Bombycilla japonica* and a Siberian Accentor *Prunella montanella*. Four more Eurasian Siskins were found at this site on 24 and 27 November. Also of interest were up to 14 Crested Tit-Warblers *Leptopoeile elegans* on 24 and 27 November and three or four Ala Shan Redstarts *Phoenicurus alashanicus* on 27th.

Late news has been received of an Eared Pitta *Pitta phayrei* seen on Hainan during the winter (JC). This is the first record for the island; the closest populations being c. 350 km to the west in East Tonkin, Vietnam.

HONG KONG

Interesting summering species included a Plumbeous Redstart *Rhyacornis fuliginosus* at Ho Chung from 7 July into August (MH, TM), and four Black-faced Spoonbills *Platalea minor* at Mai Po on 8th July remaining through August (JSRE, PK, MT).

During the autumn four more species were added to the ever-growing Hong Kong list: A Collared Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris* was seen from the Mai Po boardwalk on 7 October (JSRE); a Rufous-bellied Woodpecker *Picoides hyperythrus* was at Tai Po Kau on 13 November remaining to the end of the month (RL *et al.*); a White-throated Rock-Thrush *Monticola gularis* was trapped at Kadoorie Farm on 11 November (PL *et al.*) and one or two female or immature birds were present at Tai Po Kau on 29 November to 2 December (RL, PK); and single Pale-footed Bush-Warblers *Cettia pallidipes* were trapped at Kadoorie Farm on 6 October and 11 November (PL *et al.*). A female or immature Tiger Shrike *Lanius tigrinus* at Tai Po Kau on 9th September (WY) was the third Hong Kong record and a Fairy Pitta *Pitta nympha* also at Tai Po Kau on 23 September (RR), would be the fourth record if accepted.

Two Spoon-billed Sandpipers *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus* at Tsim Bei Tsui on 10 October (WY) and a Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* (locality not reported) on 19th (RL) were good autumn records. Other interesting records during the autumn included: an immature Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* at Mai Po on 13 October (RL); a Siberian Blue Robin *Erithacus cyane* on the Peak on 4 September and two Thick-billed Warblers *Phragamaticola aedon* at Mai Po on 29 and 30 September, all trapped (DM, PL, AG); a Yellow-browed Bunting *Emberiza chrysophrys* at Mai Po on 11 October (SC) (a different individual had been trapped and ringed in the spring); a Bull-headed Shrike *Lanius bucephalus* seen and photographed at Tsim Bei Tsui on 24 October (MH) and reported again there on 2 November (RL); a Blyth's Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum* trapped at Mai Po on 3 November (and subsequently re-trapped on two occasions) (PL); and single male Siberian Thrushes *Zoothera sibirica* at Tai Po Kau on 7 (WY) and 12 (MT) November. Eurasian Siskins *Carduelis spinus* were recorded in some numbers; six at Stanley Mound on 10 November (JSRE, CV); up to 60 near Shek Kong on 24 November (JH, WY *et al.*) and 30 at Mai Po on 25 November (RL *et al.*).

A flock of 86 Oriental Storks observed at Mai Po on 29 November increased to 97 and stayed into 1991 (SC, ML *et al.*). This unprecedented winter record is presumably the result of displacement from regular wintering grounds in China.

INDIA

A visit to Manipur and North Cachar during late December and early January (MB, MM) produced interesting sightings of little-known birds. Of particular interest was a flock of c. ten Wedge-billed Wren-Babblers *Sphenocichla humei* near Mahur, North Cachar on 4th. A Striped Laughingthrush *Garrulax virgatus* was observed near Mahur on 29th and 31st and another three found near Ukhrul, Manipur on 4th. Also near Ukhrul on the 4th was a Long-tailed Wren-Babbler *Spelaeornis chocolatinus*. Grey-bellied Tragopan *Tragopan blythii* was reported present in the area by local hunters.

Four possible firsts for the Andaman Islands were recorded during 11-16 February (JE); a male Eastern Marsh-Harrier *Circus spilonotus*, two Eurasian Collared Doves *Streptopelia dacaocto*, a Black-browed Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps* and two Red-throated Flycatchers *Ficedula parva*.

Of note on the mainland were two Black Bazas *Aviceda leuphotes* in Madras on 11 February (JE), an Eastern Marsh-Harrier at the Periyar sanctuary, Kerala on 8 February (JE), a Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* at Munnar, Kerala on 6 February (JE) and a Brown-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa muttui* in Guindy Park, Madras on 12 February (JE).

A visit to Pulicat Lake, Andhra Pradesh in January (NL) produced several interesting records. A dark phase Western Reef-Egret *Egretta gularis*, scarce on the east Indian coast, was seen on 20-21st. A flock of 70 Common Ringed Plovers *Charadrius hiaticula* on 20th was a remarkable concentration, considering that the species is only recorded as a vagrant to India. Ten or twelve Slender-billed Gulls *Larus genei* on 20-21st were unusual, and perhaps new for the east Indian coast. Also of interest was a Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* on 21st.

An Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* at Vendanthangal, Tamil Nadu on 18 January (NL) was to the south of the species' regular wintering range. At least three Tawny (Sykes's Crested) Larks *Galerida deva* were found displaying and apparently holding territory on the shores of Lake Pakel, Andhra Pradesh on 28 January (NL). This is a welcome record of this little-known central Indian endemic.

INDONESIA

KALIMANTAN

During 27 July - 6 August the lowland forest of Kutai National Park, east Kalimantan was visited by BvB, HK and JM. Wallace's Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus nanus* was seen regularly near the Mentoko research centre and once in disturbed roadside forest south of Bontang on 27th. Single Rufous-bellied Eagles *Hieraaetus kienerii* were seen above the Sengatta River on 31st and over disturbed forest north of Samarinda on 6th. In the Mentoko area a Short-toed Coucal *Centropus rectunguis* was found calling on 1st, a Brown Wood-Owl *Strix leptogrammica* was seen, and several pairs of the endemic Blue-headed Pitta *Pitta baudi* and a pair of Rufous-chested Flycatchers *Ficedula dumetoria* found. A Sacred Kingfisher *Halcyon sancta* was seen at the Teluk Kaba post on 29th. Other species rarely recorded from Kalimantan included Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, Large Wood-shrike *Tephrodornis virgatus*, Grey-bellied Bulbul *Pycnonotus cyaniventris* and Grey-cheeked Bulbul *Criniger bres*.

NEPAL

On a visit to Kosi Barrage in December SH found no Bengal Floricans *Houbaropsis bengalensis* or Hodgson's Bushchats *Saxicola insignis* and reports that the area in which he had seen them in 1985 is now totally converted to arable fields (see *Bulletin* 12 p.6 Ed.). A single Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni* was seen on the summit of Pulchowki on 24 December (SH).

PHILIPPINES

Large numbers of Chinese Egrets *Egretta eulophotes* were present on Palawan, with the highest count being 155 at a high tide roost near Puerto Princesa on 8 March. On the same island, a single Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* at Iwahig fishponds on 8 March was a first record for the country. A Striated Warbler *Megalurus palustris* at Iwahig fishponds on 8 March was the first record for Palawan.

A first summer Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris* on Olango Island, Cebu on 4 March was the second record for the Philippines, although this individual had been present for at least a week.

Near Bislig, Mindanao on 3 March one Azure-breasted Pitta *Pitta steerii* was seen and another heard and is probably the first Mindanao record of this species for many years. The same observer saw a male Little Slaty Flycatcher *Ficedula basilanica*, a very rarely-seen endemic, at the same locality. (NR)



Black-tailed Gull *Larus crassirostris* by Adam Davison.

SRI LANKA

A Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* observed at Hevativu Island on 23 February is the first record for Sri Lanka. Two Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* at the same location on 23 February and six at Kattaikadu on 9 March were very good for Sri Lanka with only a few past records. Six Red Knot *C. canutus* at Pullichankulama on 6 March were also unusual (RDS).

THAILAND

In the south, a juvenile Malayan Night-Heron *Gorsachius melanolophus* was found at Khao Pra Bang Khram, Krabi on 24 October (PR, UT), and another observed there on 7 December (MC). A female Jambu Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus jambu* was observed at the same locality on 8 December (MC), and a rufous phase Oriental Scops-Owl *Otus sunia* the same day (PR, UT). One or two more Chestnut-capped Thrushes *Zoothera interpres* were heard singing at Namtok Roi Chan Phan Wang, Tambon Ao Tong, Trang on 2 September (PR, UT).

In the south-east two Lesser Adjutants *Leptoptilos javanicus* and five Painted Storks *Mycteria leucocephala* were observed flying over Chatchoengsao wildlife research

station, Khao Ang Ru Nai WS on 24 November (KK, PK, RL *et al.*), raising hopes that a small resident population of the two species remains in the area.

A Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* was flushed from the side of a forest road in Kaeng Krachan National Park, Phetchaburi on 28 October (BBC), and the same, or another, seen again on 11 December (AK, PSa, NS, SW *et al.*). This locality in south-west Thailand is one of only two known sites for the species in the country. At Kaeng Krachan reservoir, a Grey-headed Fish-Eagle *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus* was reported on 7 October (WC, CH, CHo, KK, PK, RL, UW *et al.*); the species is now threatened in Thailand. Two Flavescent Bulbuls *Pycnonotus flavesceus* were found near the summit of Phanoen Thung, Kaeng Krachan National Park, on 28 October (BBC); apparently the most southerly known record in continental South-East Asia apart from the Lang Bian-Da Lat highlands in southern Vietnam.

A good passage of Black Bazas was observed from the roadside in Prachaup province, with 4,721 counted, mostly between Bang Saphan Noi and Bang Saphan, during a two hour period on 26 October (PD, UT).

In Doi Inthanon National Park, a White-rumped Vulture *Gyps bengalensis* was seen flying over Km 39 on 13 November (KK, KS). A Northern Hobby *Falco subbuteo* was seen on the Phu Koom Khao trail in Nam Nao NP on 22 October (SM, PS, SV). Also at Doi Inthanon, a Spot-breasted Laughingthrush *Garrulax merulinus* was reported from Km. 37 on 27 August (GC).

A male Japanese Paradise-Flycatcher *Terpsiphone atrocaudata*, scarce in Thailand, was reported from Bang Poo, Samut Prakan on 17 October (KK, M).

Ten House Sparrows *Passer domesticus* were said to be roosting with a flock of 100 Eurasian Tree-Sparrows *P. montanus* in Uttaradit during 29 September to 14 October (PLe), indicating a range extension for the species, which was previously known to occur only at Mae Sot in the far west of the country. Asian Golden Weavers *Ploceus hypoxanthus* were recorded from the same locality, with a male seen at a nest and a female feeding young during 23-28 September, and 2 males and 12-15 females or juveniles during 4-11 October (PLe).

Records were collated by Craig Robson from observations and contributions by the following: B. van Balen (BvB), Bangkok Bird Club (BBC), M. Beaman (MB), W. Chantawarang (WC), J. Christensen (JC), M. Cocker (MC), G. Cooper (GC), R. De Silva (RDS), J. Eames (JE), C. Hankaew (CH), Hong Kong Birdwatching Society (SC, JSRE, AG, JH, MH, ML, PL, RL, DM, TM, RR, MT, CV, WY), C. Hongvisitkul (CHo), J. Hornskov (JHo), H-J. Kalisch (HK), A. Kasem (AK), P. Kennerley (PK), K. Komolphalin (KK), P. Komolphalin (PK), P. Lekuthai, (PLe), R. Lekvanich (RL), N. Lindsey (NL), Macaulay (M), J. Meiss (JM), M. Morton (MM), S. Muangpin (SM), N. Redman (Birdquest) (NR), P. Round (PR), N. Saengkaew (NS), P. Saengkaew (PSa), P. Sajjakamol (PS), K. Sirilak (KS), U. Treesucon (UT), S. Vuthipong (SV), M. Williams (MW), S. Wiboonchutikul (SW), U. Wongthieres (UW).

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Guidelines for contributors

Whilst the Editor is always pleased to discuss possible contributions with potential authors, and to advise on preparation, it would be helpful if the following guidelines could be adhered to:

1. Articles These should be written clearly, preferably typed, on one side of the page, with all lines double-spaced, leaving wide margins, and should be no longer than 2,000 words. Scientific names should appear at the first mention of each species or, if all species appear in a table, they may be given there instead. Scientific names should, where possible, follow King *et al.* (1975) *A field guide to the birds of South-East Asia*.

Any tables to accompany articles should be prepared on separate pieces of paper, and be thoroughly checked. Titles of tables should be self-explanatory. Diagrams should be clearly drawn, in ink, ideally 15cm wide and 11cm high. References should be cited in alphabetical order at the end of the paper in the same style used in this Bulletin.

It would be helpful if two copies of each contribution could be submitted.

2. Recent Reports These should follow the format in the current edition of the OBC Bulletin, and be sent to OBC, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL, UK.
3. News/Information Typed or handwritten contributions should be sent to R. Grimmett, c/o The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL, UK.

Although every effort is made to retain all articles in their submitted form, the Editorial Committee reserves the right to make changes that it deems necessary, and, in a minimum of cases, without prior reference to the author. It is assumed that all contributors submitting material understand and accept these conditions.

For News and Views, Book Reviews, Announcements and Letters, the deadline for submission of material is 1 March (May Bulletin) and 1 September (November Bulletin). Recent Reports are needed one month earlier. The deadlines do not apply to main articles which will be published as soon as possible after acceptance by the Editorial Committee.

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